BEAT GT3 AND TWISTED METAL: BLACK | PLUS: THE BEST TRICKS AND TIPS FOR ALL THE GAMES YOU'RE PLAYING RIGHT NOW

ZIFF DAVIS MEDIA

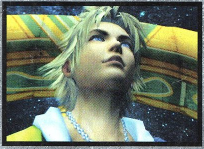
September 2001
ISSUE 48

OFFICIAL U.S. PlayStation MAGAZINE

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine Issue 48 (September 2001)

ICO

THE BEST GAME YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF



WOW!

FINAL FANTASY X IS OUT IN JAPAN AND IT LOOKS AWESOME

OVER 50

PREVIEWS OF HOT GAMES YOU'LL BE PLAYING THIS FALL

FIGHT!

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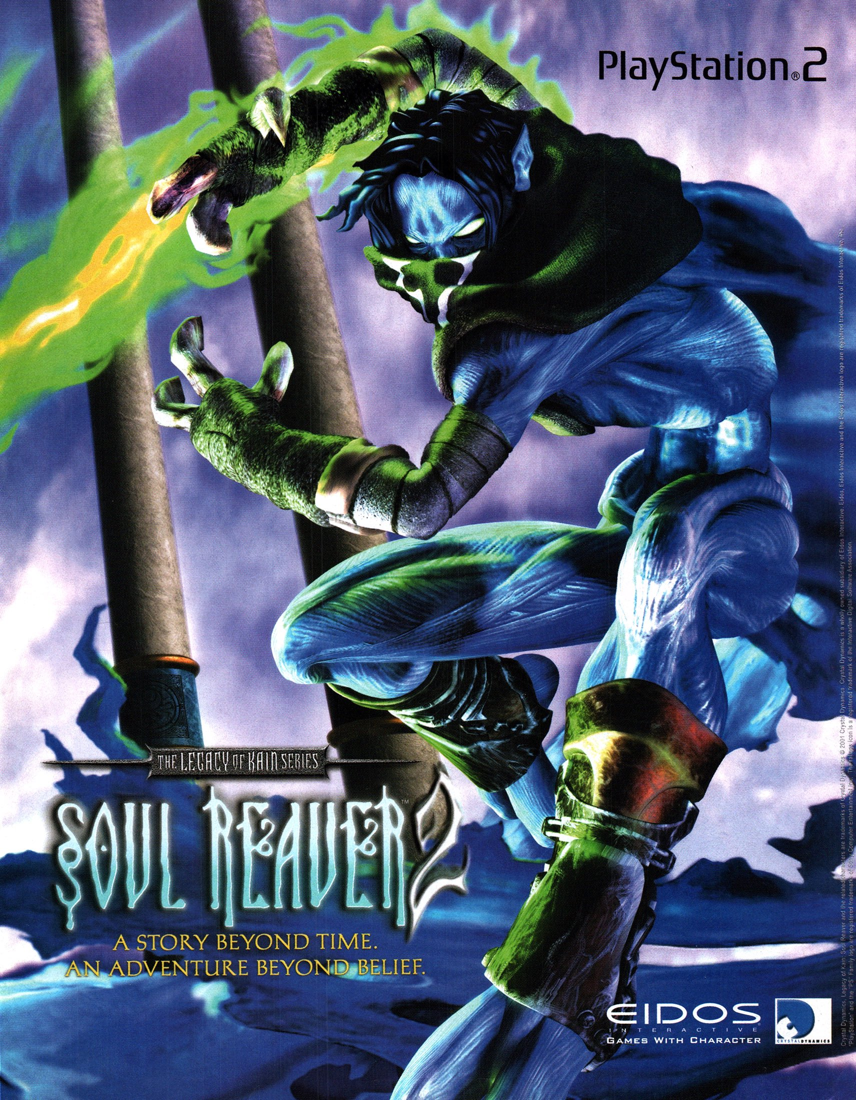
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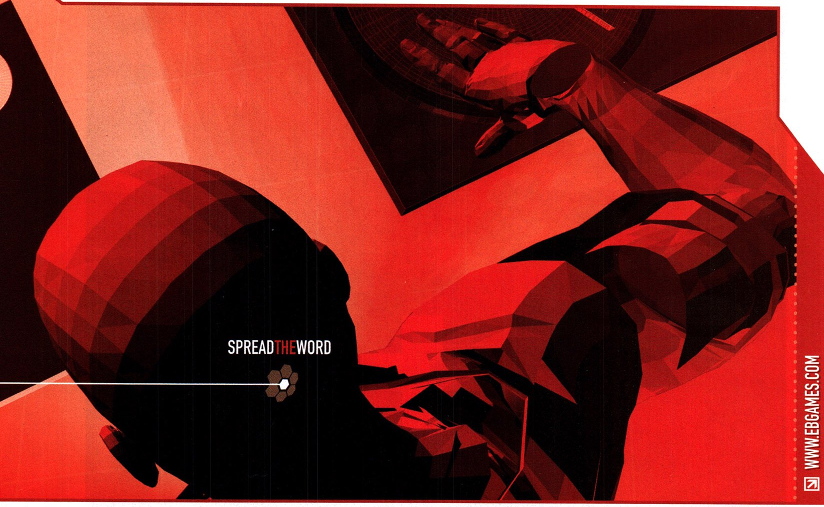
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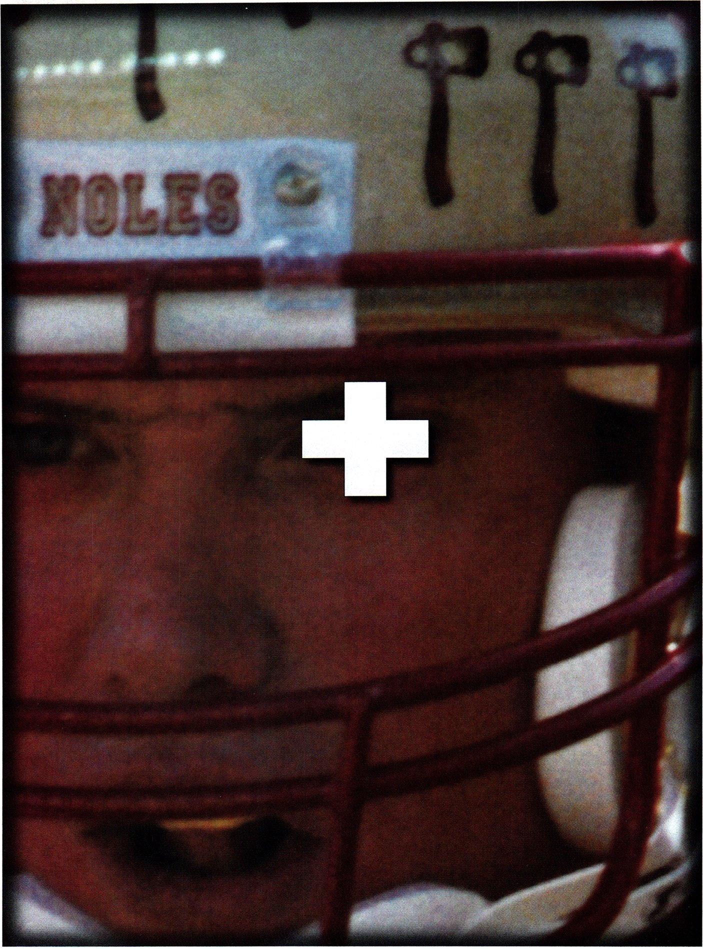

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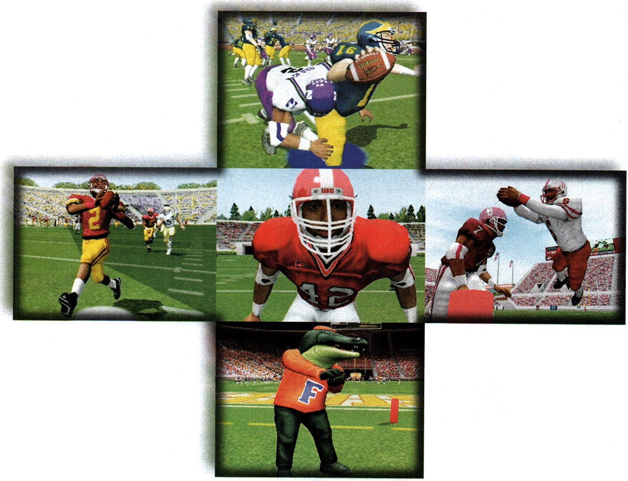

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PENNY ARCADE
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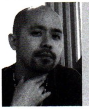

YUTAKA OHBUCHI
Our Japanese correspondent is responsible for some of the more bizarre international coverage in the magazine. This month he brings us behind-the-scenes information from the developer of our cover game, Ico.

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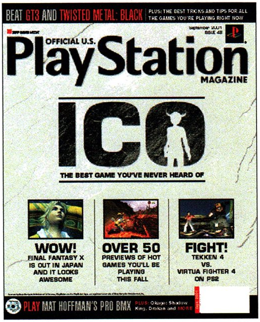
COVER STORIES THIS MONTH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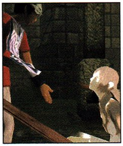

ICO • 100

It really is the best game you've never heard of. While other titles have attracted mountains of hype, one of the finest games of the season looks set to slip by without much fanfare. Check it out—it's truly gorgeous.

TEKKEN 4 VS. VIRTUA FIGHTER 4 • 32

The fighting game heavyweights go head to head on the same system for the first time ever. Both push the PS2 to the limits, and both push the boundaries of what we expect from the genre.

OVER 50 PREVIEWS • 78

This fall is gonna be an awesome time for PS2 owners, with some incredible games due in stores before the holidays. It's not all next-generation titles, though—we have cool PS one games for you too!

FINAL FANTASY X • 78

Aside from Metal Gear Solid 2, Final Fantasy X is possibly the most anticipated game on PS2. It's out in Japan already, but we have to wait until January or February for a U.S. release.

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine (ISSN #1094-6683) is published monthly by Ziff Davis Media Inc., 28 East 28th Street, New York, NY 10016. Periodicals Postage Paid at New York, NY 10016 and additional mailing offices. Single-issue rate: $7.99 ($8.99 for October and December). Subscription Rates: One Year (12 issues and 12 demo discs) $49.97 U.S., $65.97 all other countries. We periodically make lists of our customers available to mailers of goods and services. If you do not wish to receive such mailings, please write to us and include a copy of your mailing label. Subscription Service Questions and Address Changes Write to: Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine, P.O. Box 55362, Boulder, CO 80322-5362. For Subscription Service Inquiries call us at: 800.627.6458 U.S. and Canada, or (303) 604-7445 all other countries. Fax us: 850.683.4094 U.S. and Canada, or 303.604.0518 all other countries. Or visit our subscription Web site at http://service.playstationmagazine.com. The editors and publishers are not responsible for unsolicited materials. Without limiting the rights under copyrights reserved herein, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in or introduced into a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form, or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise) without the prior written notice of Ziff Davis Media Inc. Copyright © 2001 Ziff Davis Media. All Rights Reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without permission is prohibited. For permission to reuse material in this publication or on www.playstationmagazine.com, or to use our logo, contact Ziff Davis Media's Rights and Permissions Manager: Olga Gonopolsky, Ziff Davis Media Inc., 28 East 28th Street, New York, NY 10016. Tel: 212-503-5438. Fax: 212 503-5420. E-mail: olga_gonopolsky@ziffdavis.com. For reprints, contact Reprint Services at 800-217-7874. TM & © for all other products and the characters contained therein are owned by the respective trademark and copyright holders. All materials in this magazine are subject to change and the publisher assumes no responsibility for such changes. The Canadian GST registration number is 14049 6720 RT. Printed in the USA.

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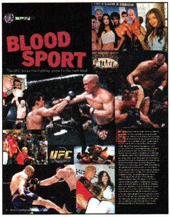
BLOOD SPORT
UFC

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Play Mat Hoffman this month, and watch numerous PS2 videos.

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Let us know your thoughts. Write us at our usual address, or send us e-mail at **OPM@ziffdavis.com**.

Spin • 32
An exclusive interview with the minds behind Rockstar games, who sound off about everything. Also, a special report on the upcoming UFC game from Crave. Plus, coverage of the latest music and DVDs, movie news, gaming gossip and industry insight. And to open it all up, check out the cool shots from Tekken 4 and Virtua Fighter 4.

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So you've bought GT3, but you're still lagging behind? Let us help you get to the front of the pack.

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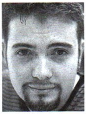
The best game you've never heard of...



John Davison
Editor in Chief

It's not often that we feel the need to evangelize a game, but in the case of Ico, we feel it's certainly worthy of everyone's attention. We're not doing this because it's a Sony game, or because anyone's pushed us to do so. It's simply something that we just know is going to impress the hell out of you. Oddly it has received very little attention since it was announced over a year ago, and as of yet, very little seems to be happening in the way of promoting it. Our enthusiasm is quite real, and when the game hits stores in early September we believe it's going to attract a lot of attention, most of it no doubt prefaced with the comment, "Where the hell did this come from?"

Rather than simply take an old gameplay style and jazz it up with funky graphics, Ico is far more of an "artistic" experience than most are conditioned to expect from a video game. The experience is not simply enjoyable or visually impressive—it really is quite genuinely emotional. It seems that the elusive goal of plucking a gamer's heartstrings is finally being reached, and all of us here at *OPM* applaud the work of the development team.

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VIDEO PREVIEWS:
Legion: The Legend of Excalibur (RP)
Escape from Monkey Island (T)
Disney's Atlantis: The Lost Empire (E)
Drakan II (RP)
OKAGE: Shadow King (RP)
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MAT HOFFMAN'S PRO BMX **EVERYONE**
What's all the rage? Is this game Tony Hawk on a bike, or is it the next great X-game? Questions galore, but with this demo you should get a good idea of what the game looks and feels like. And we think you'll like it lots.

DISNEY'S ATLANTIS: THE LOST EMPIRE **EVERYONE**
Here you'll find exciting gameplay, you'll be hit over the head with radical strategies and mind-bending plot twists. Oh, no. We're sorry. Wrong game. This is just another Disney platformer.

OKAGE: SHADOW KING **RATING PENDING**
The time has come for RPGs to start their PS2 bombardment. Apparently there will be between 50-80 hours of gameplay. But the game looks real pretty-like. So it seems it's worth it.

ESCAPE FROM MONKEY ISLAND **TEEN**
Guybrush Threepwood. Take a second to wrap your brainstem around that one. Actually, it's not even the wittiest, sharpest part of the game. See for yourself, knowing that *OPM* gave it a perfect score.

DRAKAN: THE ANCIENTS' GATES **RATING PENDING**
There are some *OPM*ers who didn't give this game a second look at E3, but once they saw the demo disc they were very piqued, interest-wise. You'll be hearing plenty about this title in the near future.

LEGION: THE LEGEND OF EXCALIBUR **RATING PENDING**
With Legion, you'll be taking control of Arthur and the legendary Knights of the Round Table. You'll command Arthur's legions in battle in an attempt to take down Morgan Le Fay.

PlayStation
PlayStation 2

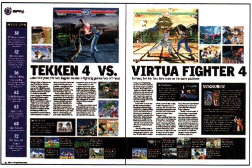
CHECK OUT NEXT MONTH'S DVD
Yes! It's finally here! The long-awaited PS2 demo disc. But we've got more than just playable demos (nine, to be exact). Don't miss the exclusive features, interviews and behind-the-scenes looks at tons of titles. Check out page 128 for more info!

SPECIAL FEATURES

ÎCO

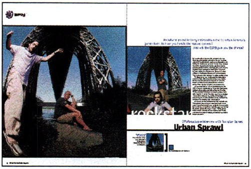
ICO • 100

Once in a rare while a game like Ico comes along. The kind of game that heralds more magic than Houdini. So why haven't you heard of it? You will. And, like us, you won't be able to put it down once you're under its spell.


TEKKEN 4 VS. VIRTUA FIGHTER 4

FIGHT FRENZY • 32

Two of the biggest fighting franchises are going to hit the same system at the same time for the first time ever? Now this is a fight we can't wait to see.


rockstar

Urban Sprawl

ROCKSTAR SPEAKS • 42

Rockstar Games has made a name for itself by giving edgier gamers out there something to play. Here they sound off about pop culture, games as art, PS2 success and whether or not the ESRB is doing their job.

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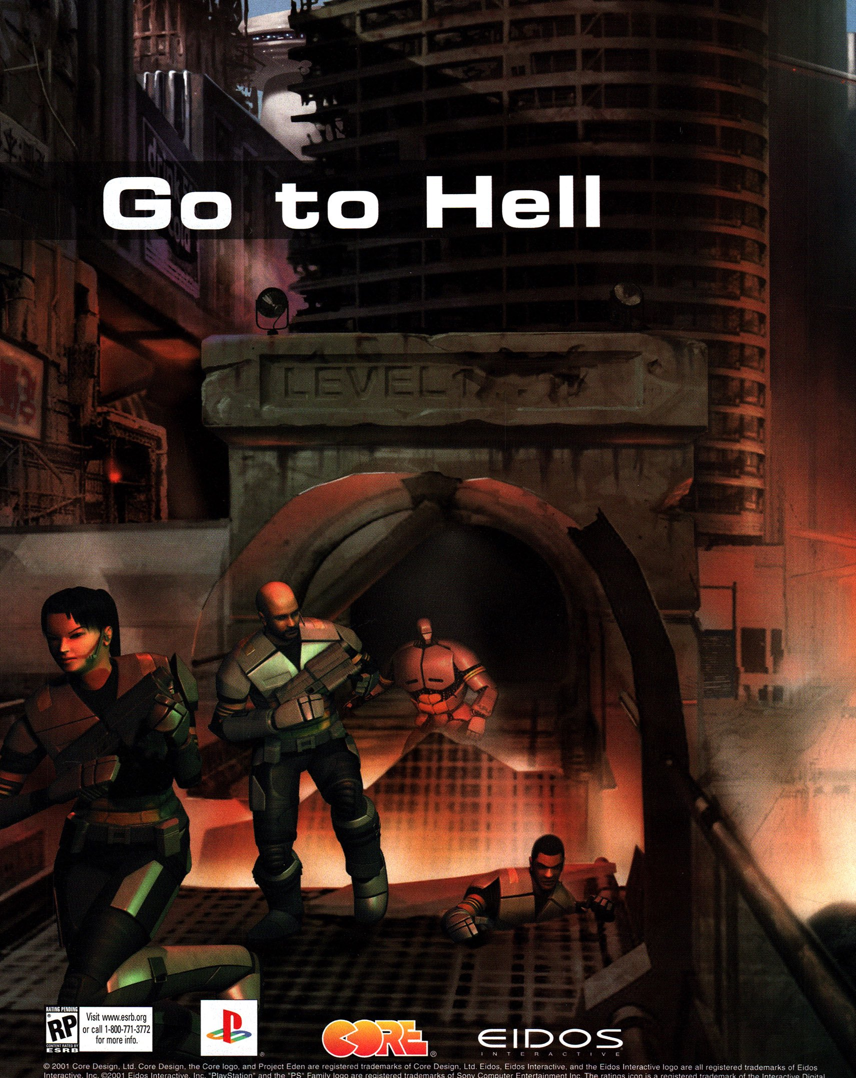
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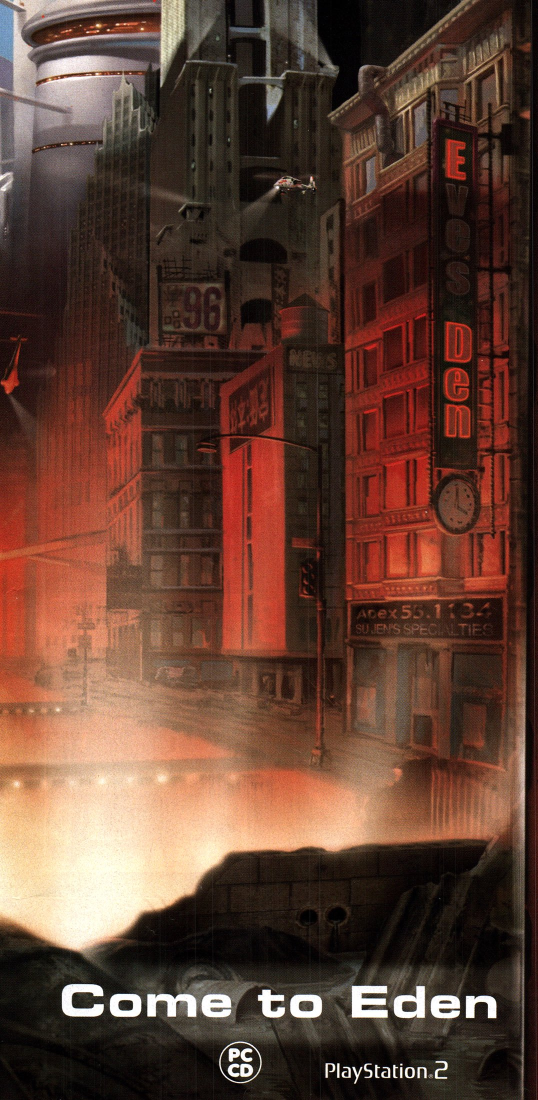
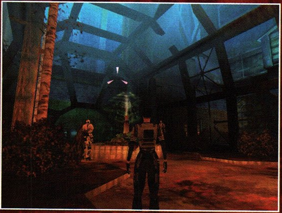


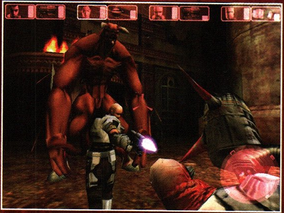
PC CD

PlayStation 2

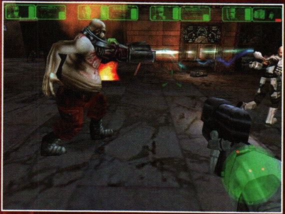
Due to severe overpopulation, the Earth's diameter is increasing with the growth of towering mega cities. As civilization climbs high into the sky, it buries below its refuse; criminals, the wretched and the deranged. Now, amidst reports o violence and atrocity in lower levels, a service crew has disappeared without a trace.



Lead a team of specialists into an abyss of vast caverns, snake-like passageways and luring dead-ends.



Tread lightly. The depths belong to twisted cults, mutants and hideous creatures that were never meant to exist.



Play in single player mode, or with up to 4 others in multiplayer.

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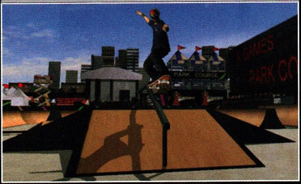
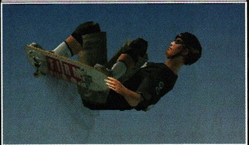
DETAILS. DETAILS.

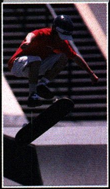
11 NUMBER OF RAMPS ON THE X GAMES STREET COURSE.



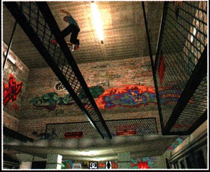
8,460 NUMBER OF BOARD SET-UP COMBINATIONS AVAILABLE.



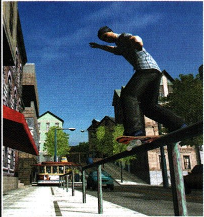
19 NUMBER OF KICKFLIP COMBINATIONS



1,000 POINT VALUE FOR GRINDING ACROSS A SUBWAY STATION.



9 NUMBER OF LOCATIONS TO SKATE AND COMPETE IN.



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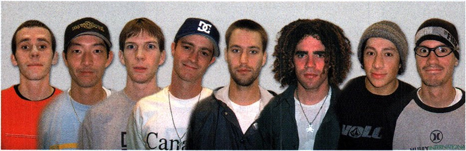
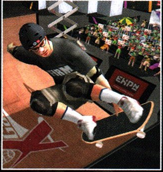
DETAILS.

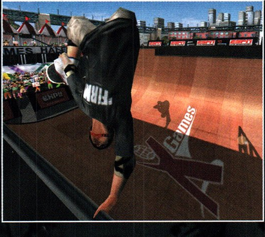
8 NUMBER OF PRO'S YOU CAN PLAY AS.
RICK MCCRANK, LINCOLN UEDA, KERRY GETZ, COLIN MCKAY, CHRIS SENN, CHAD FERNANDEZ, CARLOS DE ANDRADE, BOB BURNQUIST



2,009 NUMBER OF POLYGONS USED TO MODEL BOB BURNQUIST.



2.4 Billion TOTAL NUMBER OF TRICK COMBINATIONS.



201,126 NUMBER OF ATTENDEES AT THE 2000 X GAMES IN SAN FRANCISCO.

gear and boards. Progress through nine mind-blowing action/arcade levels from the X Games to the decks of a passenger liner with hidden challenges and secret areas. With ESPN X Games Skateboarding, it's the details that count.

X Games skateboarding

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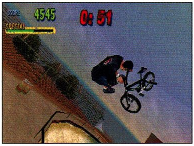
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX



It's been a while since we last mentioned Tony Hawk's Pro Skater in this section, so we included a playable demo of Pro Skater's fraternal twin on this month's disc just to reassure everyone of our love of all things Neversoft (in actuality, Pro BMX uses the Tony Hawk engine, but was developed by Shaba Games instead of Neversoft). Oh, and we can't forget the little fact that Mat Hoffman is a top-selling game, currently perched at the No. 1 spot on the PS one sales chart. You kids sure seem to like those X-sports!

If you've already played Tony Hawk, then you know how to play this game—the control scheme is almost exactly the same. If not, we'd imagine the embarrassment of admitting you've never enjoyed a THPS-style game would be too much to overcome, and thus you'll skip right over the demo. Pick either Mat "The Condor" Hoffman or Mike "Rooftop" Escamilla as your rider, and then tweak your bike to your liking. You can adjust your forks, handlebars, sprockets, freewheels and tires; take note of the way your bike's attributes change depending on the equipment you choose. The water treatment plant is full of good spots for stringing together combos, but you only get two minutes for a run, so don't waste too much time looking around.

PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION • **DEVELOPER:** SHABA GAMES
AVAILABLE: NOW • **PLAYERS:** 1 -2 • **GENRE:** X-SPORTS

EVERYONE

△	GRIND	L1	QUICK SPIN
□	QUICK TRICK	L2	ROTATE
○	GRAB TRICKS	R1	QUICK SPIN
×	BUNNY HOP/TURN	R2	ROTATE

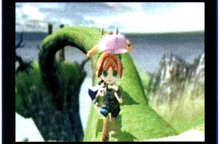
Disney's Atlantis: The Lost Empire

Stunning gamers and industry analysts everywhere, Disney has decided to use this summer's Atlantis movie property as the backdrop for a 3D action/platforming game. Such a shocking move deviates from Disney's usual offerings of first-person shooters, real-time military strategy games and Minnie Mouse dating simulations—which raises the question: Can the company pull off such a drastic genre shift? We give our take on this industry-shattering news in this month's Reviews section.

EVERYONE

PUBLISHER: SONY CEA • **DEVELOPER:** ZOMBIE • **AVAILABLE:** NOW • **PLAYERS:** 1 • **GENRE:** ACTION

OKAGE: Shadow King

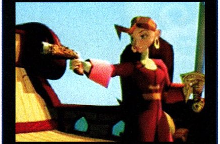


The RPGs are finally starting to surface on the PS2 (it really wasn't that long of a wait, if you think about it). OKAGE: Shadow King, developed by Zener Works and published by Sony CEA, looks to have the typical RPG staples: A young man unwittingly stumbles into a big quest, which undoubtedly includes solving numerous puzzles and toppling creatures of varying degrees of evil. Sony promises between 50 and 80 hours of gameplay—this may seem like a lot, but if all that time is spent in environments like those shown in the demo movie, we won't complain. Although the story revolves around a devil's desire to regain his position as an evil king, the game never takes itself too seriously and is full of humorous moments. Look for a review of OKAGE in next month's issue.

RATING PENDING

PUBLISHER: SCEA • **DEVELOPER:** ZENER WORKS • **AVAILABLE:** AUGUST • **PLAYERS:** 1 • **GENRE:** RPG

Escape from Monkey Island

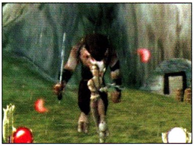


LucasArts has quite the pedigree when it comes to adventure games—classic PC titles like Sam & Max Hit the Road, Day of the Tentacle, Grim Fandango—and, of course, the Monkey Island series. Escape from Monkey Island is the fourth installment of the offbeat adventures of Guybrush Threepwood, and is the first Monkey Island game to be fully 3D. LucasArts has loaded the game with challenging puzzles, quirky writing, witty one-liners, and even the occasional monkey. If that's not enough, keep in mind that we awarded this game our highest score: a full five discs.

TEEN

PUBLISHER: LUCASARTS • **DEVELOPER:** LUCASARTS • **AVAILABLE:** NOW • **PLAYERS:** 1 • **GENRE:** ADVENTURE

Drakan II

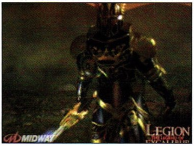


It's a medieval kind of demo disc this month, bicycle riders notwithstanding. Drakan II is a one-player adventure from Sony CEA and Surreal Software that features two characters on a rescue mission: the female warrior Rynn and the dragon Arohk. As you can see in the movie, the two characters each have their own style of gameplay (we're most excited by the Panzer Dragoon-esque aerial combat). Drakan II should be out later this fall. Keep your eye on it.

RATING PENDING

PUBLISHER: SCEA • **DEVELOPER:** SURREAL SOFTWARE • **AVAILABLE:** NOVEMBER • **PLAYERS:** 1 • **GENRE:** ADVENTURE

Legion: The Legend of Excalibur



This hybrid RPG/real-time strategy/action game from Midway is set in the mythical land of Camelot, and puts you in control of King Arthur and his legendary Knights of the Round Table. Wielding Excalibur, perhaps the most famous sword of all, you command Arthur's army legions in battle against your malevolent counterpart Morgan Le Fay. The 14 missions feature dynamic battlefields, magic spells, weapons and items, and the ability to take control of the 12 Knights. Look for it in stores later this year.

RATING PENDING

PUBLISHER: MIDWAY • **DEVELOPER:** 7 STUDIOS • **AVAILABLE:** FALL • **PLAYERS:** 1 • **GENRE:** RPG

Next Month's Demo Disc

You've asked, begged, pleaded and demanded it. So here it is—*OPM*'s first PS2 demo disc! We've teamed up with *PlayStation Underground* to put together a DVD packed with nine playable demos, including our current cover boy Ico. Also on the disc: a video feature on E3, a look behind the scenes of Dark Cloud, memory card downloads and more! Turn to page 128 for even more details!

DISC PROBLEMS?

Did you buy a copy of our magazine that did not contain a demo CD? Simply send the receipt in an envelope marked "OPM Replacement Disc" to the address below with the name and address of the store plus your phone number and address and we'll send you the disc. Make sure you specify which month the corresponding disc belongs to in order to ensure you get the right one.

Also, if you have a malfunctioning or non-working demo disc, call SCEA at 1-800-345-SONY. They will provide instructions to obtain repair or replacement services.

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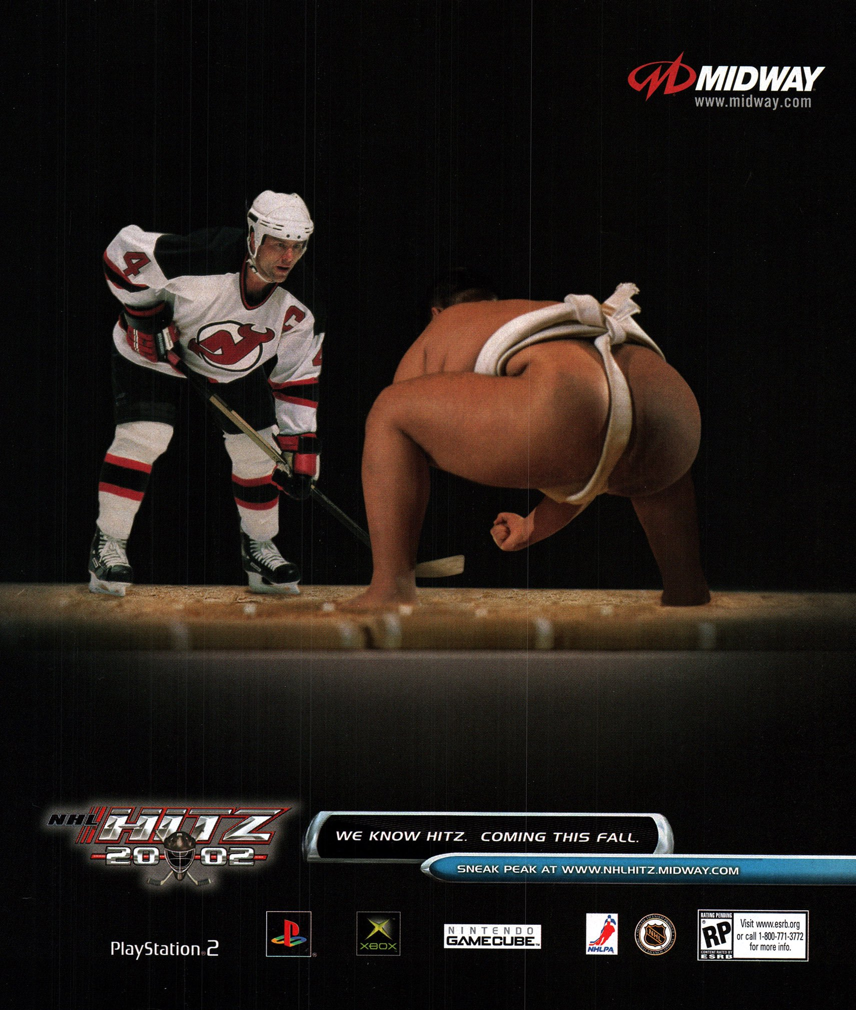
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– DailyRadar.com

"There is no other game like it on the PS2."

– PSE2 Magazine

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Think you have what it takes to write the Letter of the Month? Send us your video-game expositions and you could win the official *OPM* Box of Joy. We pack our Box of Joy with an assortment of nifty goodies from all your favorite software companies.

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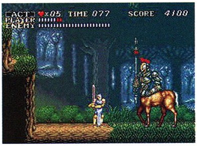
Dark Cloud Is A Ripoff

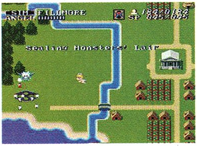
Over the past few weeks I have been indulging in the exceptional Dark Cloud, when I had a flashback to the "good ol' SNES" days. I remember playing a game that featured an old-style, action/RPG battle system, similar to the older Zelda games. I don't remember the exact storyline but here's the gist of it:

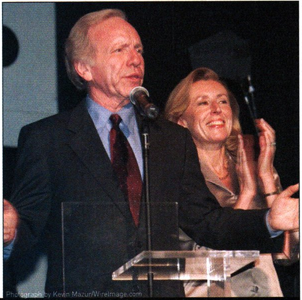
The game starred a young man whose town was destroyed. He is the sole survivor—except, of course, some rather strange potted plants that this young warrior has attained the ability to communicate with. His task is to fight in a dungeon to collect the crystals that contain the various pieces of his town, from village members to buildings, thereby rebuilding his home. Now is it just me, or does this sound a lot like Dark Cloud? Can you tell me the name of this SNES game and if it served as any official inspiration toward the creation of Dark Cloud? Or is this amazing PS2 gem merely a ripoff?

Mark Heslop
king_of_cows@hotmail.com

Sounds to us like you're talking about ActRaiser, which was a damn fine game from Enix and was very similar to Dark Cloud in a lot of respects. Here are some screens for you to get nostalgic about...







Photograph by Kevin Mazur/WireImage.com

Letter of the month

"I like Gore." Former Vice President Al, that is.

I played the first Resident Evil in its entirety and loved it, but I haven't touched a horror-based game since. They're just not for me. I get thrills enough from racing and sports games. The only real downside to the pervasive violence in games is that it gives video games a bad rap in the non-gaming public. Thankfully, Senator Joe Lieberman has succeeded in forcing the games industry to police itself, lending credibility to the industry as a whole.

And if you think Lieberman is actually the enemy, just realize that with the ESRB rating in place, developers are free to create unbelievably violent and grotesque games with the ability to tell parents and the public, "Look, we're telling you it's violent. Buying this is your decision." Which is ultimately the way it should be. I don't like violent games (or even RPGs). But they should be allowed to be made and sold.

MATURE ® M CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Dan Balser
lisadanemail@earthlink.com

It wasn't necessarily Joe Lieberman who "forced" the games industry to police itself. The IDSA (Interactive Digital Software Association, www.idsa.com) has long been a trailblazer in the field of self-regulation. The ratings system that we're now so used to has been an entirely voluntary one devised by the games industry to serve publishers, retailers and consumers in the best way possible. Sure, Lieberman got a lot of mileage out of demonizing something that isn't understood by everyone in the general public, but ultimately his efforts simply drew attention to what the IDSA was already working to develop.

Your comments are perfectly true, though, and they're also raised in our interview this month with Rockstar's Sam Houser and Terry Donovan. Within the confines of the ratings system, developers and publishers should be free to express themselves in whatever manner they see fit.

It's True!

You've been asking us for ages, and now we're able to answer: Next month we will be teaming up with *PlayStation Underground* to bring you a PS2 demo disc.

Is It All Over?

As a PS one owner, I am going crazy! I think it is totally unfair that all the good, cool games are going to PS2 and not to PS one. For some reason PS one owners are getting games like Atlantis: The Lost Empire. Sure, that's an OK game for people who still dream about being a Power Ranger. Are we going to see any good stuff? Or is it all over?

jace121288@aol.com

RPG Bore

This is in response to issue 47, page 98, "Top Five Complaints About Final Fantasy," complaint No. 5. There I was one day enjoying the section devoted to all things FF, when I read No. 5, and I quote: "*Melodrama overload.* Love stories. Life and death. Betrayal and redemption. Ugh." Now I don't know how many people agree or disagree with me and frankly, I DON'T CARE, but my opinion is, melodrama is a good thing—and you can never have too much of a good thing. Melodrama, even if used just to fill in a story, is one piece of the formula of a greater story. Many past Final Fantasies were famous for their melodrama: Cecil's quest for redemption after hurting the Black Mages, killing Rydia's mom and indirectly causing the destruction of the village of the Summoners; Rosa leaving to find Cecil, falling sick and Cecil questing to save her; Galuf's Death; Gilgamesh and Enkiedo siding with Bartz at the end for vengeance (if memory serves correctly). ***[Blah, blah, blah....he goes on for pages about this stuff – Ed.]*** I believe I've made my point but I'm sure there is one *OPM* editor who agrees with me (as he is obsessed with Vivi), Gary Steinman.

Xenogearsfanatic@hotmail.com

We hate to disappoint you, but it was actually Gary who worked on the Final Fantasy feature and he's the man responsible for putting the list of gripes together. We were expecting it to provoke a response, but we didn't expect to get so many e-mails on this topic. Just because we all love the series doesn't necessarily mean it's perfect. To recap (for those who didn't pick up last issue), we highlighted the following as our "top five complaints" about the Final Fantasy series in general.

1. *Random battles*
2. *Over-the-top effects*
3. *Where's the game?*
4. *Same battle music*
5. *Melodrama overload*

Melodramatic

I must say that the Final Fantasy issue was absolutely wonderful. I love FF and really enjoyed reading the fantastic brain-candy you guys offered on the delicious FF concepts. But one thing that threw me was a box that read

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"How else are developers going to make a character seem real and not just a conformist to society or just someone of a brainwashed rebellious faction?"

I LIKE GORE!

Last month we asked you to let us know your feelings about horror and gore in video games, and here's what you had to say:

Horror is the art of buildup and suspense. Gore is the climax and the reward to the viewer for their efforts in the journey that they take part in. As you noted in your article, Stephen King movies carefully place gore where its impact will heighten the experience. Same as in games: Misplaced gore is no different than a poorly written script.
Nik Foscarini
Star Wars: Coming Of Age
http://www.geocities.com/quiteontheset

I like blood, gore and violence in a game because it distinguishes a kid game from an adult game. There's a Mature rating for these games for a reason.
teamacidrain98@aol.com

I think that there are way too many violent and gory games. I own Metal Gear Solid, which is bloody enough, but it pales in comparison with games like Resident Evil. You should be able to toggle the gore in all graphic games, not just some.
kengie19@cs.com

"Top Five Complaints About Final Fantasy." Yes, random battles do get old in maze-type areas. The same battle theme, and the one billionth time you've seen an elaborate summon, might be something to complain about. But the melodrama overload? Come on, let's think about that one. How else are developers going to make a character seem real and not just a conformist to society or just someone of a brainwashed rebellious faction? Real people fall in love. Real people worry about life and death. That's what brings the characters and story to life. It gives the audience something to relate to. Betrayal and redemption are needed to spice things up. I think in order to have an unpredictable game you need to consider all possible elements, real or fantasy. It's needed to give the plot that little twist so it might not be so predictable. If gamers don't like it, they should go play a predictable adventure game or a shoot-'em-up killing game where the storyline sucks. I'm surprised any Final Fantasy fan would consider such an important element of the best RPG series something to complain about.
Nicole Walker
reddragon66@att.net

Surely you can tackle the issues of love and hate without being melodramatic? Surely it's better to *experience* the emotion than to have it rammed down your throat? Let us know what you think. Send your thoughts to opm@ziffdavis.com and mark your e-mails MELODRAMA.

Do You Ask Your Parents First?

I saw your pie chart in the August issue of *OPM* that was titled "Do you consult your parents before purchasing a game?" and I just had to e-mail you, to let you know that I always take the high road. I consult my parents every time. Strangely enough, they become somewhat irritated and refuse to participate in my decision making. They tell me: "Son, you're 34 years old, with a wife and three children. We think it's time you started taking responsibility for yourself." Go figure!
Joe Dennis
joed@modempool.com

QUICK HITS

DALE? NO
Is Dale Earnhardt going to be in any more NASCAR games?
Kris Wysong
Holyh20@bellsouth.net

Probably not. Him being dead and all.

RED IS TASTY
I have spent the last two hours eating your magazine. The articles printed in red taste the best. Please print more.
Jadenova2001@aol.com

Thank you for your time. You'll enjoy our UFC feature this month, then. And this strip here.

BRITNEY IS COMING SOON, PROMISE
In your recent issue you didn't put in a pic of Britney Spears! Come on! Show me another one.
mk1071@excite.com

Maybe soon, when we preview her new game.

QUESTION OF THE MOMENT

More game-related movie stuff this month. Next month, we want to know what kind of demos and other content you'd like to see when we join forces with *PlayStation Underground* for our PlayStation 2 disc. E-mail us at OPM@ziffdavis.com. Mark your notes UNDERGROUND.

I think Square really screwed up on the *Final Fantasy* movie. It's not like any of the Final Fantasy games.
Ssj4chubbs@yahoo.com

Tomb Raider was the most worthless piece of crap I have ever seen. I feel sorry for the creator of the game. There was a total of five seconds of greatness to it (in the shower), and it wasn't *that* great.
Ur2big4yobritches@yahoo.com

I just recently saw *Tomb Raider*. It was mind-blowing, had tons of action and was a kick-ass movie!! Do I want more video game-related movies? *Lara Croft's accent* "Absolutely."
Emily Toth
Nemutai_senshi@sailormoon.com

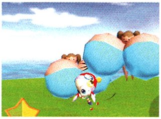
LISA KELLY'S MOST WANTED

1. **Final Fantasy X**
2. **Grand Theft Auto 3**
3. **Metal Gear Solid 2**
4. **Baldur's Gate: DA**
5. **Klonoa 2**
6. **Tony Hawk 3**
7. **Monster Rancher 3**
8. **Half-Life**
9. **Gallop Racer 2001**
10. **TimeSplitters 2**

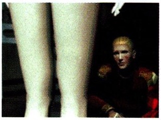
E-mail your most wanted list to **OPM@ziffdavis.com** Mark the subject MOST WANTED.

Screen Caption Contest

Every month we run a pic, and it's your job to come up with a witty caption. E-mail your captions to **OPM@ziffdavis.com** and mark the subject **CAPTION CONTEST**. The new picture, from Resident Evil–Code: Veronica X, should be easy enough.



WINNER!
"In the event of a water landing, the inflatable cushion can be used as a flotation device."
cnmmack@aol.com



CAPTION THIS
Think of something that'll make us giggle like young Japanese school girls and you could be a winner.

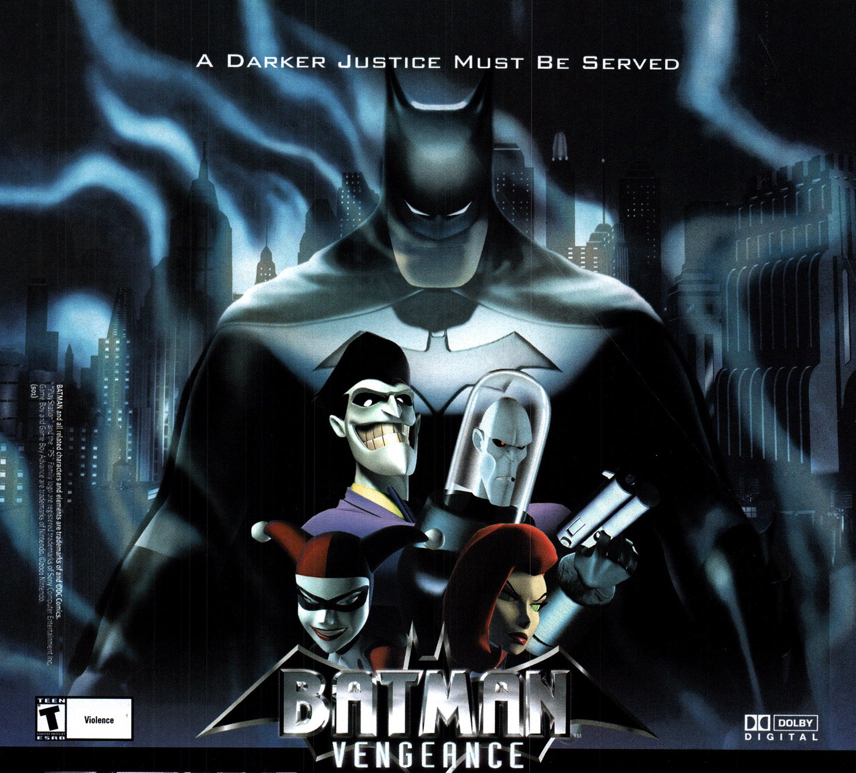
Official Contest and Sweepstakes Rules

OPM CAPTION CONTEST Official Contest Rules:
1. No Purchase Necessary: To enter, send an original caption for the designated screen shot on a standard-sized postcard containing your name, address, and phone number to "OPM Caption Sweepstakes" PO Box 3338, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338. No purchase or payment of any money is necessary to enter. All entries must be handwritten. Mechanically reproduced entries will not be accepted. Entries must be received by the 10th day of the month for the next available issue of OPM. All entries become exclusive property of Ziff Davis Media Inc. and will not be acknowledged or returned. Ziff Davis Media Inc. assumes no responsibility for lost, mutilated, late, illegible, incomplete, postage-due or misdirected entries. 2. Prizes: One Grand Prize winner will receive one (1) video game or one (1) video game-related item as determined by Ziff Davis Media Inc. Grand Prize has an approximate retail value of $20-50. All entries will be judged on the following criteria by OPM editors, whose decisions are final: (50%) originality and (50%) creativity. Entries containing obscene language will be disqualified. All prize winners will be notified by mail. Prize(s) are non-transferable. No substitutions of prize(s) are allowed, except at the option of Ziff Davis Media Inc. should the featured prizes become unavailable. 3. Odds of Winning: The odds of winning will be determined by number of valid entries received. 4. Eligibility: Contest open to residents of United States and Canada. Void in Quebec. Non-compliance with the time parameters contained herein or return of any prize/prize notification as undeliverable will result in disqualification. Winners or their legal guardians shall sign an affidavit of eligibility/release of liability/prize acceptance within 5 days of receipt or forfeit prize. By acceptance of prize, winner(s) agree to the use of their name and/or likeness for purposes of advertising, trade or promotion without further compensation, unless prohibited by law. Ziff Davis Media Inc., nor its affiliates, subsidiaries, divisions or related companies are responsible or liable for any damages, taxes or expenses that consumers might incur as a result of this contest or receipt of prize. 5. Winners List: For a list of winners, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope identifying the month for which the winners list is requested to "OPM Quote Contest Winners List" at the address listed above. Allow 4 weeks for delivery of winners list. 6. Restrictions: Void where prohibited or restricted by law. All federal, state and local regulations apply.

OPM LETTER OF THE MONTH Official Contest Rules:
1. No Purchase Necessary: To enter, send a letter or standard-size postcard containing your name, address, and phone number together with your comments to "OPM Letter of the Month", PO Box 3338, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338. No purchase or payment of any money is necessary to enter. One entry per household. All entries must be handwritten. Mechanically reproduced entries will not be accepted. Entries must be received by the 10th day of the month for the next available issue of OPM. All entries become exclusive property of Ziff Davis Media Inc. and will not be acknowledged or returned. Ziff Davis Media Inc. assumes no responsibility for lost, mutilated, late, illegible, incomplete, postage-due or misdirected entries. 2. Prizes: One Grand Prize winner will receive a box containing various items from the OPM offices. Grand Prize has an approximate retail value of at least $10. Winners will be selected by a judging panel whose decisions are final. Winners shall be selected from all valid entries received. All entries will be judged on the following criteria by OPM editors, whose decisions are final: (50%) originality and (50%) creativity. Entries containing obscene language will be disqualified. All prize winners will be notified by mail. Prize(s) are non-transferable. No substitutions of prize(s) are allowed, except at the option of Ziff Davis Media Inc. should the featured prizes become unavailable. 3. Odds of Winning: The odds of winning will be determined by number of valid entries received. 4. Eligibility: Contest open to residents of United States and Canada. Void in Quebec. Non-compliance with the time parameters contained herein or return of any prize/prize notification as undeliverable will result in disqualification. Winners or their legal guardians shall sign an affidavit of eligibility/release of liability/prize acceptance within 5 days of receipt or forfeit prize. By acceptance of prize, winner(s) agree to the use of their name and/or likeness for purposes of advertising, trade or promotion without further compensation, unless prohibited by law. Neither Ziff Davis Media Inc., nor its affiliates, subsidiaries, divisions or related companies are responsible or liable for any damages, taxes or expenses that consumers might incur as a result of this contest or receipt of prize. 5. Winners List: For a list of winners, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope identifying the month for which the winners list is requested to "OPM Letter of the Month Winners List" at the address listed above. Allow 4 weeks for delivery of winners list. 6. Restrictions: Void where prohibited or restricted by law. All federal, state and local regulations apply.

OPM TMB JACKET Official Contest Rules:
1. No Purchase Necessary: To enter, send a letter or standard-size postcard containing your name, address, and phone number together with a Twisted Metal: Black code, trick or strategy to "OPM TMB JACKET," PO Box 3338, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338, or send an email to opm@ziffdavis.com and mark the subject line "OPM TMB JACKET." No purchase or payment of any money is necessary to enter. One entry per household. Mechanically reproduced entries will not be accepted. Entries must be received by the 10th day of the month for the next available issue of OPM. All entries become exclusive property of Ziff Davis Media Inc. and will not be acknowledged or returned. Ziff Davis Media Inc. assumes no responsibility for lost, mutilated, late, illegible, incomplete, postage-due or misdirected entries. 2. Prizes: One Grand Prize winner will receive Twisted Metal: Black jacket. Grand Prize has an approximate retail value of at least $40. Winners will be selected by a judging panel whose decisions are final. Winners shall be selected from all valid entries received. All entries will be judged on the following criteria by OPM editors, whose decisions are final: (50%) originality and (50%) creativity. Entries containing obscene language will be disqualified. All prize winners will be notified by mail. Prize(s) are non-transferable. No substitutions of prize(s) are allowed, except at the option of Ziff Davis Media Inc. should the featured prizes become unavailable. 3. Odds of Winning: The odds of winning will be determined by number of valid entries received. 4. Eligibility: Contest open to residents of United States and Canada. Void in Quebec. Non-compliance with the time parameters contained herein or return of any prize/prize notification as undeliverable will result in disqualification. Winners or their legal guardians shall sign an affidavit of eligibility/release of liability/prize acceptance within 5 days of receipt or forfeit prize. By acceptance of prize, winner(s) agree to the use of their name and/or likeness for purposes of advertising, trade or promotion without further compensation, unless prohibited by law. Neither Ziff Davis Media Inc., nor its affiliates, subsidiaries, divisions or related companies are responsible or liable for any damages, taxes or expenses that consumers might incur as a result of this contest or receipt of prize. 5. Winners List: For a list of winners, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope identifying the month for which the winners list is requested to "OPM TMB Jacket Contest List" at the address listed above. Allow 4 weeks for delivery of winners list. 6. Restrictions: Void where prohibited or restricted by law. All federal, state and local regulations apply.

A DARKER JUSTICE MUST BE SERVED



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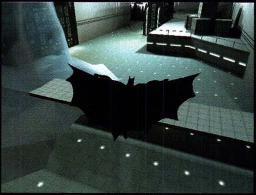
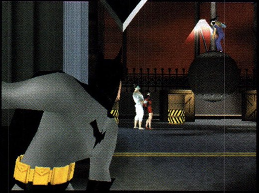


Next Gen Action with over 500 animated Batman moves



Next Gen Gear including 10 devices like remote charges

Next Gen Combat with intense martial-arts combos

For more info visit www.ubisoft.com/batmanvengeance

PlayStation 2 · GAME BOY ADVANCE · XBOX · Ubi Soft ENTERTAINMENT

PlayStation 2

twisted metal:

www.scea.com

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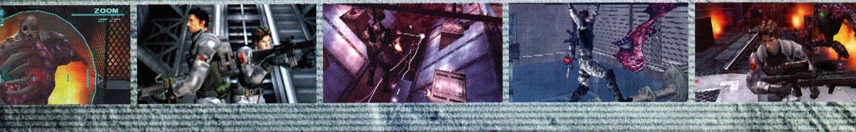
MATURE
M
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Blood and Gore
Violence
INCOG INC.
entertainment
BLACK™

of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.

PlayStation 2



MATURE
M
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

Blood
Violence

DEEPSPACE

www.scea.com

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7 MILES ABOVE ANTARCTICA, A WEATHER SATELLITE SENDS BACK AN IMAGE.

Your special forces reconnaissance unit is ordered to investigate a distress signal. You arrive and discover a virus has violently mutated every living and non-living thing in its path. The mission objectives are clear: rescue survivors, secure the area and destroy the virus. If you can.

EXTERMINATION

Dark Cloud™

YOUR
MOTEL
RIGHT
TURN
NOW
IT'S

Titan
speed

PlayStation 2
INTERSTATE
2
RE
REA
BUILDE
ALTY COMPA
THE WORLD

Without warning, it came down from the sky. A dark, mysterious force unleashed by an evil spirit. The tranquil village of Norune was no match for such immense power. In the blink of an eye, destruction was complete. But amid the ruin, there is hope. A brave young warrior, Toan, armed with only a magical gem, faces the ultimate task of rebuilding the world. Venture with him deep underground to discover clues and gather vital elements of life—trees, rivers, houses and more—that will help restore civilization. Epic battles, macabre demons and daring rescues lie before you. As does the fate of the world. Will rubble be eternal? Or will it flourish once again?

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

Comic Mischief and Violence

www.scea.com

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INSIDE SPIN

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FF Movie Premiere
The (real life) stars were on hand to celebrate the opening of the *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within.*

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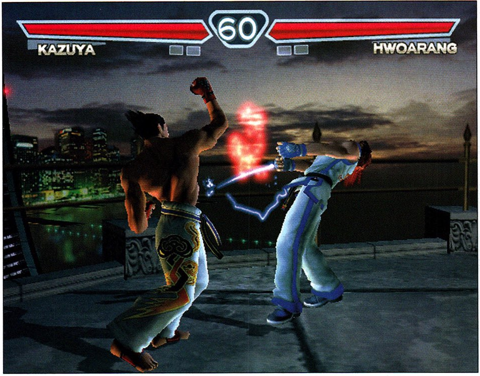
HWOARANG
60
LAW

LAW
60
HWOARANG



TEKKEN 4 VS.

Later this year, the two biggest names in fighting games face off head

After the success of Sega's arcade game Virtua Fighter, long-time rival Namco quickly decided to come up with a 3D fighting game of its own—even hiring away some VF staff members to help create it. In 1995, Namco released its answer to the game. Tekken would be the first 3D texture-mapped fighter, just beating out Virtua Fighter 2 to arcades by a matter of months. Namco would make its fighting system unique by assigning a button for each limb of the character. Not only that, but with the advantage of Namco and Sony's System 11 arcade hardware, a perfect port became a reality on the PS one. Ever since, Namco has developed its Tekken games on PlayStation-based hardware. The same goes for Tekken 4, which is now being created on the PS2-based System 246 board.

Namco is taking Tekken 4 to a new level by adding the dynamic of a closed arena. Gone are the limitless floors of past games—walls now play a strategic element in your gameplay. Using this effectively, knocking someone into a wall opens your opponent up to additional combos. To make things even more interesting, each stage takes on a different shape, and some contain obstacles that can be used much as you'd use a wall.

Namco has also put more emphasis on sidestepping and positioning. Timing your sidestep leads to opening your challenger up to a free hit. Moving away from corners also proves important, as a trapped player can time a position change that grabs the opponent, hurling him or her into the corner—just like a reversal in wrestling.

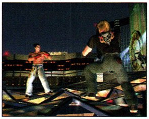
If history is any indicator, expect Tekken 4's PS2 version to come loaded with features unavailable in the arcade version and a number of unlockable characters. The game should hit early next year.

STEVE
60
KING

CHRISTIE
60
STEVE

Did You Know?

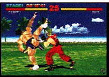
In Japan, Namco and Sega have both teamed up to help promote their new fighting games by staging a mock rivalry. They've gone so far as to place versus ads in newspapers.



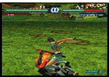
PAUL
60
KAZUYA

BLOW BY BLOW

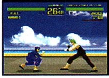
A listing of the Tekken and Virtua Fighter games as they've come out through the years...



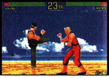
Tekken (1994)
Due to its unique style for its time, Tekken didn't gain real popularity until the PS one game's debut.



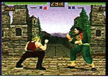
Tekken 2 (1995)
Although only slightly better visually, Tekken 2 featured a nice refinement of the Tekken gameplay.



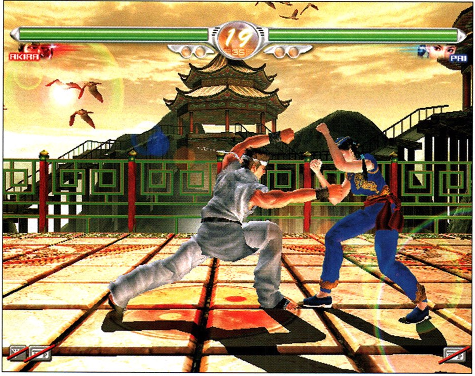
Virtua Fighter (1993)
As the first-ever 3D polygonal fighting game, Virtua Fighter proved itself quite popular in arcades.

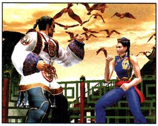


Virtua Fighter Remix (1994)
Because of Tekken's nicer, textured look, Sega went back and redid the graphics of the first VF.



Virtua Fighter 2 (1995)
Still the best-selling VF ever, VF2 had stunning graphics and improved gameplay over part 1.





VIRTUA FIGHTER 4

to head, for the first time ever on the same platform

In 1993, Sega brought fighting games to a new level by introducing the first polygon-based title of the genre, Virtua Fighter, to the arcades. Not only did it offer new depth and smooth animation, but it also introduced a new style of play. Since then, the series has spawned five additional incarnations—which brings us to the latest, Virtua Fighter 4.

Series creator Yu Suzuki and his AM2 development division have strayed away from simply updating Virtua Fighter 3, stating that the latest rendition is more like a sequel to Virtua Fighter 2. Most notable is the absence of the Evade button, which reverts the game back to its original three-button layout. However, the new eight-way movement scheme still allows you to implement evasive maneuvers.

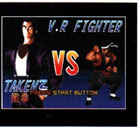
Also altered is the design of the arenas. While VF3 introduced elevated heights to the floor of the ring, VF4 sticks with the traditionally flat, square ring that consists of either a walled barrier or an open area. Also, the movement of characters manipulates the arena floors, like footprints in the snow, cracked floor panels, kicked leaves and more.

While most Virtua Fighter fans will feel right at home playing VF4 for the first time, it doesn't take long to notice the game's tweaks to timing and priorities for moves, meant to add balance. In addition, AM2 has now included a quick get-up move, similar to that found in Soul Calibur and the Tekken series (pulled off by pressing Guard, Punch and Kick at the right time). Because of this, the free pounce hits of the past are no longer a guarantee.

Although the arcade version of VF4 is running on Sega's proprietary Naomi 2 hardware (the screens you see here come from this version), Suzuki has stressed that the PS2 port is coming along nicely—and his knowledge of multiple-processor hardware (he ported VF2 to the difficult-to-program-for Saturn) gives him a good edge. Currently due out in early 2002, VF4 will be console-exclusive to the PS2 for one full year.

Did You Know?

An illegal Mega Drive game in Japan calls itself V.R Fighter Vs. Taken and pits Tekken characters against those of Virtua Fighter. A cool concept, most definitely. Too bad it sucks.

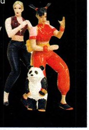


MERCHANDISE

Virtua Fighter
TEKKEN

Animated versions of video games are about as common as video-game versions of movies, so it's no surprise that two of the biggest fighting titles have had animated representations. While Tekken was only made into a feature-length movie, Virtua Fighter had its own complete television series that spanned two seasons. Both of these can be found at any online video store, such as www.amazon.com.

Recently, toys based on video games have gained quite a following. While Tekken and Virtua Fighter figures are no longer produced, you may be able to find them on clearance at local game stores like Electronics Boutique or Babbage's. No luck? Then check out a few online toy and anime stores, or maybe a comic shop. We should see new Tekken and VF toys soon.



Tekken 3 (1997)
The most popular Tekken of all time featured great new characters such as Eddy and Hwoarang.

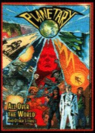
Tekken Tag Tourn. (1999)
An upgrade of sorts to Tekken 3, Tag Tournament featured more characters and tag gameplay.

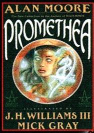
Tekken 4 (2001)
Namco has done away with the tag gameplay and has opted to go with enclosed arenas.

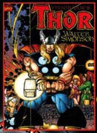
Virtua Fighter Kids (1996)
Sega released a comical, super-deformed version of Virtua Fighter for its Saturn platform.

Virtua Fighter 3 (1997)
Sega took gameplay in a new direction with part 3, though many fans felt a tad alienated by this.

Virtua Fighter 4 (2001)
Returning more to the style of VF2, Sega's upcoming installment is also a graphical marvel.

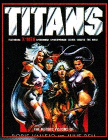

4432¥ ~~$24.95~~ 20¢

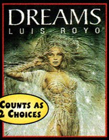

2873*^ ~~$24.95~~ 20¢


0877+ ~~$24.95~~ 20¢

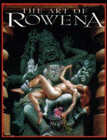
COUNTS AS 2 CHOICES

0109-9999 ~~$35.00~~ 40¢


2865+ ~~$34.95~~ 20¢


COUNTS AS 2 CHOICES

6759-9999* ~~$17.98x~~ 40¢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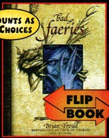
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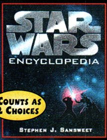
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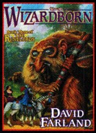
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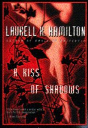
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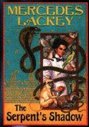
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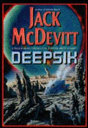
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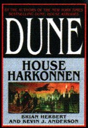
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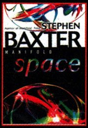
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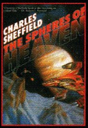
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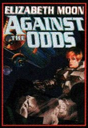
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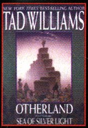
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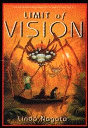
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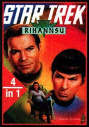
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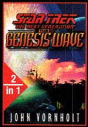
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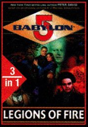
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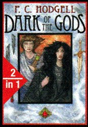
0521π ~~$14.98x~~ 20¢ *The Long Night of Centuari Prime; Armies of Light and Dark; Out of the Darkness.*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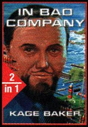
4291 ~~$12.98x~~ 20¢ *God Stalk; Dark of the Moon.*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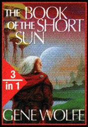
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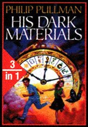
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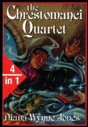
4 in 1

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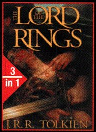
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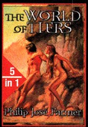
6569 ~~$65.85~~ 20¢ *The Fellowship of the Ring; The Two Towers; The Return of the King.*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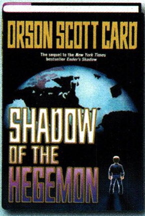
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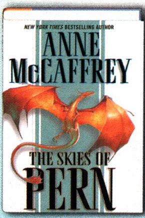
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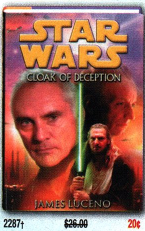
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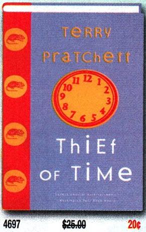
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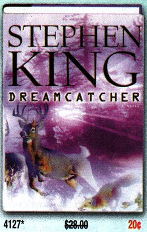
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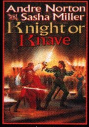
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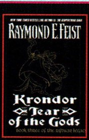
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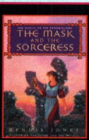
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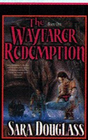
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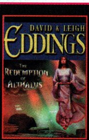
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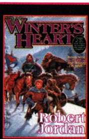
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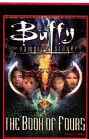
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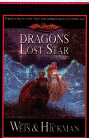
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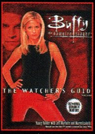
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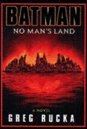
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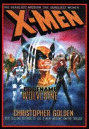
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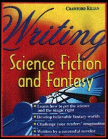
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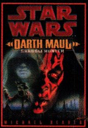
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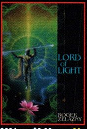
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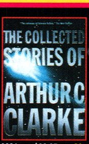
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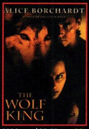
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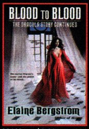
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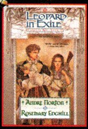
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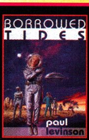
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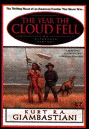
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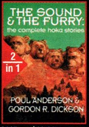
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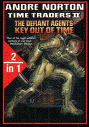
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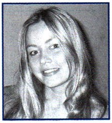
Another Chrono Trigger?

Sources at Square have revealed that a third game in the Chrono Trigger series is in the planning stages. Apparently most of the previous staff members are involved.

ZOE FLOWER

DANCING FEVER



Combine my intrinsic video-game obsession with my passion for shaking booty and you can imagine my excitement when Konami's Dance Dance Revolution finally came to North American arcades. Since then, the "Bemani" gaming experience has exploded around the world—from Bust A Move and Stepping Selection to Guitar Freaks and Samba De Amigo—and a recent chat (shouting and flailing my arms to convey my opinions is more accurate) with Takayoshi Sato, director of Silent Hill and Silent Hill 2, left me contemplating the universal lure of the dance beat.

Sato has recently come to the U.S and is busy absorbing the culture around him while developing the horrifying visuals of Silent Hill 2. But he's not interested in discussing his work. The backdrop to our conversation is a dance floor and, amidst our talk of games, girls and music, Sato admits the lack of men getting their groove on perplexes him. My pathetic grasp of the Japanese language prohibited deeper intellectual banter on societal issues surrounding gender and dance, but his perception alone exemplifies the cultural differences in our worlds. Perhaps he was just expressing his desire to dance, but his comment led me to contemplate how the same form of entertainment could differ so greatly across continents.

I immediately recalled my own trip to Japan. On a warm evening in the arcades of Akihabara, it is an infantry of local businessmen in Armani suits and sock feet, eyes smiling in a Zen-like trance, that possesses the lines of DDR machines. Like perfectly synchronized human marionettes, they move to the supernatural force of a dance beat. The scene is overly inspiring and yet doubly intimidating, as I fight to maintain my dancing cool, clinging desperately to the machine's handles, trying to avoid looking conspicuous despite my flapping blonde pigtails and squeals of laughter as I continually miss a step.

Here at home, the local arcade features quite a different entertainment experience. I notice less neon, more shoes, and a swarm of panting preteen girls flaunting their freestyle finesse. The occasional heroic b-boy steps up to bust a move, but for the most part, the guys in the crowd are glancing sideways in disdain, feverishly calculating a cost-benefit analysis to see if looking both rhythmically challenged and ridiculous in front of the new girlfriend is worth it. Later, I witness a group of rowdy kids chanting "You suck!" The words hang in the air, as the fun-seekers with the courage to shake booty for the crowd swear vehemently to purchase a home system that won't leave them ravaged by insult and ridiculed by strangers. Suddenly, the shortage of men on the dance floor doesn't seem that hard to explain.

Obviously, the dance-game genre is received in its own unique way by both countries. My visit to Japan made me realize just how important a role social perception plays in the way we entertain ourselves. By the time Sato and I complete our conversation, the dance floor has emptied. But my thoughts are filled with a new perspective. Despite differences in *how* we entertain ourselves, it only matters that the desire to do so is universal.

Zoe Flower is no longer gracing Canadian TV screens and is instead pursuing new interests in order to establish herself as a multimedia superstar. Check out her stuff at www.zoeflower.com.

GT3 Mania

Kazunori and Helio compete for bragging rights at Laguna Seca.

In a scene that rivaled the frenzy surrounding last October's PS2 launch, more than 200 people lined up in front of the EB store in Rockefeller Center, New York, on the morning of July 10 for their chance to buy Gran Turismo 3. "I've been here since 8:30 last night, and it was all worth it," said Bill Diver of Brooklyn, N.Y., as he proudly showed off his copy of GT3. Diver was the first person to purchase the U.S. version of the game.

But perhaps the biggest draw for video-racing enthusiasts was the opportunity to meet producer Kazunori Yamauchi and Indy 500 winner Helio Castronevez, as well as getting to see them compete in GT3. The fans took in quite a show, as Kazunori and Helio battled tooth-and-nail for victory on Laguna Seca. Kazunori was the winner, and he was very pleased with how quickly Helio picked up the game. "It made me realize how good the simulation in the game is. A professional driver could warm up for five minutes and have a pretty good battle with me," Kazunori beamed. "That's exactly what I was aiming for in the game."

AUGUST CALENDAR

1 WEDNESDAY • **Portal Runner** (PS2). It's not an Army Men game. No, it just happens in the Army Men world.	**2** THURSDAY • **Lord of the Rings** figures from ToyBiz in stores. • New **Simpsons** Environments released, unless of course they get canned like the Main Street set did.	**3** FRIDAY • **Rush Hour 2** hits theaters. Expect lots of kicking and funny stuff. And plenty of broken English—from both its stars. 	**14** TUESDAY • **Rocket Power Team Rocket Rescue** (PS one). Rocket-powered kid game with dumb name. We just offended someone, didn't we?	**15** WEDNESDAY • **NFL GameDay 2002, Okage: Shadow King, Half-Life, Giants: Citizen Kabuto** and **Resident Evil-Code: Veronica X** all hit PS2 on the same (expensive) day.	**16** THURSDAY • **Madonna** (1958). The Queen of Pop probably doesn't want you to know that she's 43. • **iCybie Dog**. He walks, does tricks, and leaves your wallet $200 lighter.
17 FRIDAY • **Robert DeNiro** (1943). Take a day off in his honor. Mental arithmetic reveals that he's now 58.	**19** SUNDAY • **Bill Clinton** (1946) turns 55. He used to be the president, you know. 	**21** TUESDAY • Another expensive day. **Madden NFL 2002, Test Drive Off-Road: Wide Open, Extreme G3** and **Armored Core 2: Another Age** all hit PS2, plus **Madden 2002** for PS one.	**22** WEDNESDAY • **Lord of the Rings Orc Helmets and Figures** arrive in stores for $79.99 and $119, respectively. Beard and wispy facial hair-wearers everywhere become broke.	**28** TUESDAY • Another big Tuesday. **Paris Dakar Rally, Dave Mirra 2, Stunt GP** and **Shadowman 2** all arrive in stores and underwhelm everyone with their mediocrity.	**29** WEDNESDAY • **Michael Jackson** (1958). The star of at least two video games—and, uh, pop diva—turns 43.

All dates are correct as of press time. Any inaccuracies have nothing to do with us, although we're pretty certain the birthdays are correct.

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OPM Chats with Ming-Na

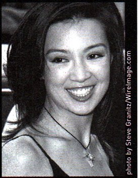


photo by Steve Granitz/WireImage.com

It might not be well known, but Ming-Na, voice of Aki Ross, had actually been working on *The Spirits Within* for the past three years. And now with her new baby and a return to NBC's *ER*, Ming-Na is certainly keeping her hands full. We caught up with the gorgeous actress before the *Final Fantasy* movie premiere in Los Angeles.

OPM: What kind of reaction did your friends have to you working on a movie based around games?
Ming-Na: *Well, they've lived through that with me with* Street Fighter, *but what I didn't anticipate [because I'm such a science-fiction nut, I have a lot of friends who are sci-fi fanatics] is that when I told them I was doing* Final Fantasy *with Sakaguchi-san, their jaws dropped. For them it was like touching God in some way.*

OPM: What was it like working with Sakaguchi?
Ming-Na: *He's incredible. I'd heard his name before and I knew about him—the legendary Sakaguchi-san. But when I met him, I couldn't believe it—he's like this little boy with such a creative mind. There's so much love and joy in his work.*

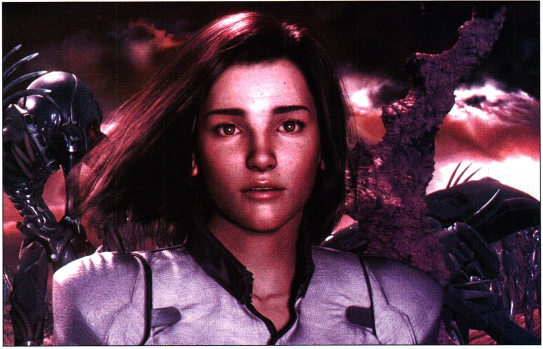
OPM: The original cut of the movie had Aki pregnant at the end. Do you feel it was good that they took that out?
Ming-Na: *Yeah, I think so. Unless they had time to do other scenes, it just seemed like they were trying to throw another wrench into the ending, to make it sappier or more poignant in a way. At first I was sort of upset that they took that moment out, but now that I've seen the final cut, I think it makes more sense.*

OPM: Could this story have been told with live actors?
Ming-Na: *Of course. Yeah. But what Sakaguchi saw was the ability to be the first to pioneer this new CG technology and to make photorealistic images of people. He saw the mountain and he wanted to climb—he wanted to be the first on top there. And I think he achieved it.*

OPM: Have you played the Final Fantasy games?
Ming-Na: *No, I actually knew nothing about the Final Fantasy games. I knew about Sakaguchi-san, but not the games. It just so happens that when I got the job, they sent me all the games and I played a few of them—and I think they're complicated [laughs]!*

OPM: What do you think about movies like this and *Tomb Raider* in which the women are the heroes?
Ming-Na: *I think it's a great trend, because four or five decades have been dominated by male action heroes. I think it's great to see these female heroines who are not only able to be fearless or strong, but can also be feminine at the same time, and still have romance and vulnerability.*

OPM: It's also nice to see Aki has an Asian side to her. She's part Asian, correct?
Ming-Na: *I think so. I think she's a real mixed bag. And I think in the future, that's what it's going to be like. If not now—I know a lot of people who are mixed bags.*



AKI'S REALITY

"It's a big gamble. We're confident that we'll succeed, but if we fail, it could do major damage to us as a company."

Telling the *Wall Street Journal* of the financial risk he was putting Square in probably wasn't easy for *Final Fantasy* director Hironobu Sakaguchi. But facing the reality that his fantasy didn't fare as well as had hoped on the big screen was no doubt much harder. The movie, which took in a mere $11.5 million over its opening weekend, came in fourth in box-office standings and left many wondering if Square will be able to break even on its $140 million picture. Especially considering the movie's rather tame reception in Japan (one movie distributor offered special-edition tickets featuring character art to help spark sales).

But others are optimistic that ticket sales for *The Spirits Within* will remain steady thanks to the massive fan following of the game series and acclaim from critics like Roger Ebert. Not to mention that Square will likely see much success with future *Final Fantasy* DVDs (loyal gamers may purchase both the normal release and the special PS2 edition).

But whether or not Square can make up for the huge cost of the movie, the company did look at its work on *The Spirits Within* as an investment (especially with the cost of creating its $45 million Honolulu studio). Square plans to begin work on a second feature as early as this fall, but the new picture hinges delicately on when Sony Pictures will sign on for the film. Square maintains that future films can be created in half the time at half the budget.

As for what type of films we can expect, Sakaguchi is currently planning more pictures that will use the Final Fantasy name, but will follow different plots and feature different characters. The only exception will be Aki—she will likely return, but in the role of a new character, with a new name.

THE WINNERS

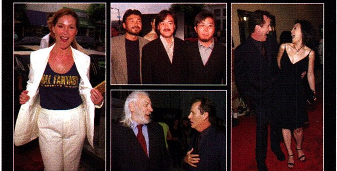
This summer's other video game-based movie, *Tomb Raider*, was clearly a bigger success at the box office, despite its rather poor reception from critics. This was likely due to Lara Croft's more universal appeal. And her massive jubblies.

Opening Weekend results

***Final Fantasy*: $11.5 million**
***Tomb Raider*: $47.7 million**

- **Tomb Raider *to date:*** *$122 million (as of July 15)*
- **Final Fantasy *to date:*** *$19.1 million (as of July 15)*
- ***Biggest July opener ever:*** *X-Men $54.47 million*
- ***Final Fantasy VII first three days:*** *$16.5 million*

Spirits in Hollywood



Some of Hollywood's finest came out to celebrate the launch of *The Spirits Within*, including James Woods, Perri Gilpin and Ming-Na.

clockwise photos by Steve Granitz/WireImage.com, Kevin Winter/ImageDirect.com, Tsuni/ImageDirect.com, Kevin Winter/ImageDirect.com

OVERHEARD: DONALD SUTHERLAND

"My wife looked at Dr. Aki on the screen, took one look at her bum, and said that she's not real."

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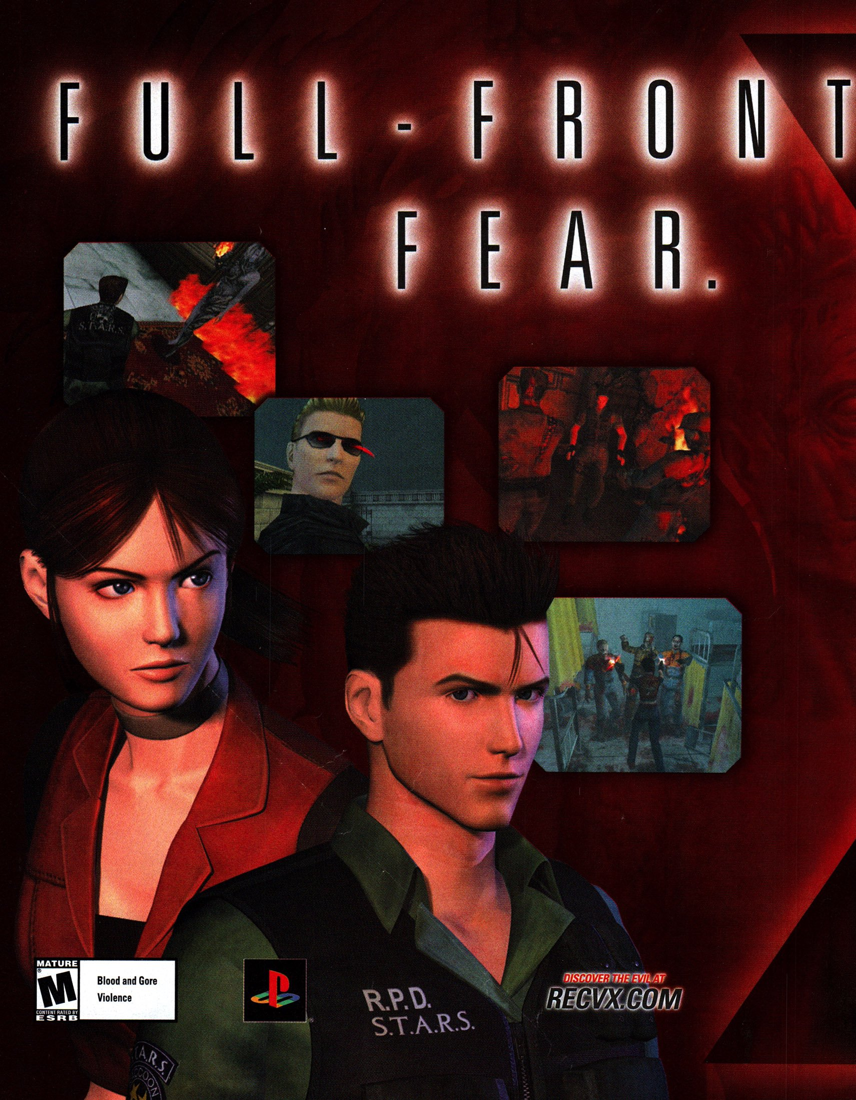
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RESIDENT EVIL CODE: Veronica X

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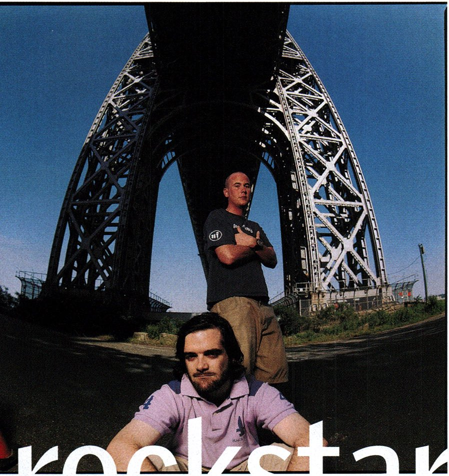
Photography by Catrina Genovese

Rockstar is poised to bring metropolitan chic to urban America's game closet. But can you handle the mature content? And will the ESRB give you the chance?



In the underbelly of New York City, we take the Six train downtown, exiting at Spring Street in SoHo. Up the subway stairs and immediately we're swallowed by Manhattan's scintillating ebb and flow, the epicenter of urban chaos. We head up a few blocks, jostling our way through streets that are pleasantly people-crowded, charmingly grime-slick. Only the slightest breeze, swirling from Washington Square Park, bothers to deflect the mild June heat. Shops are lined up, selling one-of-a-kind goodies alongside useless trinkets. They double as shields that keep the midday sunshine at bay.

We disappear into one of a thousand doorways, take a second to shake off the manic buzz of the streets outside. Minutes later, we settle into a cluttered room with Sam Houser and Terry Donovan, the braintrust of Rockstar Games. When they offer a cigarette, we politely decline.

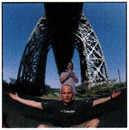
A finger-snap and the room is teased with smoke. The *BBC Network* is muted behind us. To our right, Sam Houser: unshaven, shoes untied, dark hair spilling over his collar. Within seconds we'll discover he's outspoken, brash, frantically energetic. To our left: Terry Donovan. There's not a hair on his head, he wears shorts, sandals. He's the bigger version of Moby, the one who could kick our ass. Soon we'll discover that he's reserved, quiet, calmly poignant.

At this point, we don't yet know what they're going to say. We have heard they are funny and we have heard they are crazy. Hours after, if asked to sum up the whole of our chat in three sentences, we would echo that video games are *it.* That the guy who games will soon get the girl. That the games industry doesn't stand up for itself. And they say it all with such irreverence and enthusiasm, we're hard-pressed not to believe every word.

OPM's exclusive interview with Rockstar Games

Urban Sprawl

Sam Houser and Terry Donovan: The London duo brings urban atmosphere to the greatest thing going: the video game industry.



By Todd Zuniga and John Davison

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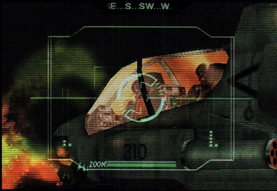
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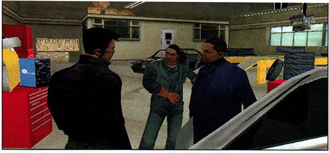
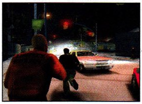
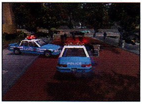
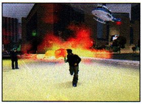


Grand Theft Auto 3: Who doesn't love a cinema-style game that includes Molotov cocktails?







POP CULTURE

On influences

Sam: Phil Collins. *Miami Vice*. AC/DC. There's no hip-hop in there, which I am into. But you can't put hip-hop next to *Miami Vice*. As for Phil Collins: A lot of people challenge me to justify liking him. The thing is, I just started liking him recently. And that's the danger in liking him. I don't know what brought it on. There's just such genius to his whole character, his whole thing. He's just a strange little guy.

Terry: I spend most of my life thinking about this list.

Sam: There's magic in "Sussudio."

Terry: *Scarface*, obviously. The Pope. Dance music in general. Hip-hop, house, techno. Every musical form came from disco. So, disco. Vicadin. I took it last year when I broke my collarbone. It was the best experience I had in a really long time. I went from being in total and utter pain to understanding every song ever written. I think I took too much, but it was excellent.

On famous people in games

Sam: The GTA series wouldn't have existed without the acting in *Goodfellas* and *Scarface*. GTA3 is an homage to those films. Recently an actor said he wouldn't be involved with our game. It's amazing when you grow up your whole life loving an actor who's famous for being a nutcase, who's wild, who comes in and says, "Man, I really want to do it." Then he looks at the game and says, "Oh, the game is too violent." But these games are cartoony, in a stylized way, being sold to the same people, the same adults, who watch his films. Very quickly you get your dreams shattered. Later he said, "Actually, I want to do it, but my family isn't into it. I have kids."

Terry: It's disappointing to meet your heroes normally.

Sam: Particularly if it's someone you genuinely like. But more and more people are up for doing things. Which might come down to money, but in this situation we didn't want to pay hundreds and hundreds of thousands of dollars to use the name as a marketing tool. We just wanted the voices. Because that's what will add texture to the game.

Terry: I don't think anyone's buying games yet based on a famous name attached to them.

I'm not in the business of selling games to 10-year-olds. I categorically admit I'm s--t at it.

Sam: But agents *think* they do. My thing to agents: If it says your actor's name on the box, it's good for *your* actor. That's how I feel. It shows that your actor and your agency is advanced and progressive. You are *not* going to sell one more game because of an actor's voice, but the subtlety of it will improve the quality of the experience 1,000 percent.

GTA3 as a film

Terry: GTA3 is the closest thing to a gangster movie that a game can be, at this point.

Sam: We storyboarded, film-style, all these scenes, mapped it all out, then mo-capped it. Some scenes even had three or four people, so there were complicated, technical procedures. Then we fed that into the game engine. Now we're getting directors in to play with the cameras. They'll structure the narrative to make sure it makes sense. So it will have a very cinematic quality. We couldn't have done GTA3 in 3D on the PS one. We couldn't have that many cars, pedestrians and the sense of chase the way we wanted. GTA3 is the game I've dreamt of making, playing, being in, my whole life. It has everything in there. And I have a clear picture in my head of who wants to buy this game. I know who they are. They're young, urban Americans.

MORAL OUTRAGE

The politics of game-bashing

Terry: Who is the person most vocal every time there's violence in a game? Is it a parent, a teacher, the gaming press, a morally concerned member of the games industry? No, it's a politician. Why are they involved? One of the last tools available for them to win votes is moral outrage.

It doesn't piss me off. Politics is politics. A fact of life. When politicians say something it doesn't make me sit and consider my inner soul and whether or not I'm darkening someone's future. I know why they're going on national TV. I sincerely believe they care more about their political career than they do the protection of American children.

You go back 20 years and Judas Priest were the outlaws. In 20 years there will be another vote-winner and they've just got to find them.

On 10-year-olds

Terry: Sam and I came to Rockstar because they were willing to make the kind of games we wanted to make. They believed there were gamers that wanted to be spoken to, games that were more sophisticated.

We make X and people want X. But we don't make X in a way that makes them feel stupid. That was a huge advantage we had early on over other forms of entertainment.

The audience had grown up and the industry wasn't really catering to the fact that the median age was shifting to 18, 19, 20. And the average age of a PlayStation owner is 24 now. You're dealing with adult people who get spoken to by fashion and film companies.

I'm not in the business of selling games to 10-year-olds. I categorically admit that I'm sh-t at it. I don't know how to communicate with a 10-year-old.

Sam: Other companies market scientifically to young kids, and you can get rich by doing it. But it's not *us*.

State of Emergency: The riots in SOE are a lot cooler than those in Seattle.

Censorship

Sam: Sony's cool about the games we make. Phil Harrison [erstwhile head of SCEA third-party development] said, "I know what you're trying to achieve and we want you to push. But we will push back when we feel we have to." There were a couple of run-ins with Thrasher where they had questioned the use of the "N" word in a hip-hop track. And my thing was, "Phil, here's the number for Sony Records, see what they think about you wanting to censor their music." And he said, "Fine, if there's any backlash, it's your problem." And of course there wasn't a problem. There would have been a problem if we'd edited the music. You can't tell GangStarr how to sing. But to their credit, Sony handled it very coolly.

Terry: You could stand and shout: We refuse to be censored! But it's important to be sensitive to the community you're selling to.

Being too obscene

Sam: I could very easily end up outside of the M-rated boundaries without breaking a sweat. But it's not difficult to stay within.

Terry: The ESRB ratings are normally based on graphical obscenity. I think to reach obscenity you have to start entering into the area of content that would be considered legally obscene. Like adult pornography. We're enthusiastic about being as relevant and realistic as possible, but we've learned from everyone else's mistakes. If you take horror films at the start of the '80s they were really huge, but the more obscene they got, the smaller the audience. There was a limit to how much endless obscenity the mass market could take. They want something that creates an emotional response, but if you hit them so many times in the same spot, they're not going to feel it.

State of Emergency and yellow journalism

Terry: I think some of the responsibility of the ESRB is helping the industry grow up. And with State of Emergency, the ESRB said, fine, it's M-rated, we don't care as long as you're not advertising to children. There was a backlash based on four or five Seattle journalists who decided to run a reasonably salacious story saying we had based the game on Seattle's WTO riots.

Sam: I hate to admit my own inadequacy and ignorance here, but to be honest, I

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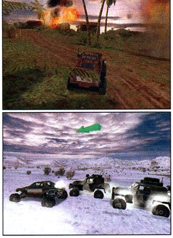
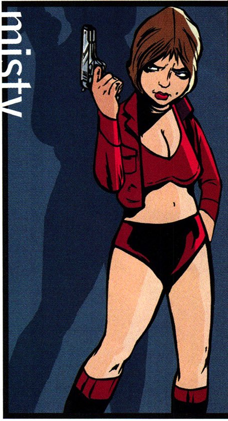


Smuggler's Run 2: Nothing says Rockstar like vast environments and contraband.



didn't even know what these WTO riots were. So how am I supposed to base something on that? We came up with the idea for SOE over two years ago. We've been working on this game a long time....

Terry: A painfully long time.

Sam: Yeah. And I said, fine. ATO. Sounds good. Let's get on with it.

Terry: We wouldn't have done it on the WTO riots anyway. They weren't cool enough. It would be, well, *dull*.

GAMES AS CHIC

On being cool

Sam: It's important to say that our whole thing is not about being cool. It's about having fun with what we do and really being proud of the artform and the industry and the medium. If I was 18, I'd really be hung up on the cool thing. But Sony made games cool. Suddenly they were in nightclubs and everyone was talking about them.

Terry: The language for describing games isn't evolved enough to make people understand it. There isn't yet a body of overeffusive, bitchy commentators that deals with the chicness of who's doing what and who's f—king who. The people who are doing stuff now haven't actually had time to consider art, craft, what's important and not important. When do you think you did something important? You just know you're doing something. The only clue is that you get really f—king excited.

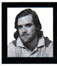
Sam: With GTA3 everything has a personality. DMA [GTA3's developer] wanted to make a living city and they wanted to have an adventure caper in there. It doesn't have the whiz-bang, candy-wow effects of a lot of the games, which means it might be overlooked for that reason. But I look at it, and it's one of the most beautiful things I've ever seen. It's like a digital, real-time, rendered-on-the-fly film.

Games vs. records

Sam: Allegedly, the record business is the "cooler" industry. I grew up wanting to work in the record industry. Not be in a band, but *work* in the record industry. But it was depressing. It was totally corporate. You meet people in the record industry now and they say, "Wow, you work in games? That's the place to be." In the consumer's eyes, we're making the coolest entertainment product out there. But as an industry, we don't stand up and say it.

Terry: The industry is very young. There hasn't been 60 years of magazines and media and endless intellectualism. Your average person in the street doesn't have simple words describing why one game is better than the other. With film, they're capable of saying they like the cinematography. Or it had a great story. On albums, the production being high-end or the songwriting fantastic. But in games that kind of geeky, girlfriendless, serial masturbator image exists. But watch people and media develop a language for it. Then it'll get more than 1/10th of a page on the back page of some lifestyle magazine that's not cool anyway.

Sam: The reality is, 25-year-olds think what we do is the greatest thing out there. It's almost like the traditional media doesn't want to admit this is the cool thing to do.



In consumer's eyes, we're making the coolest entertainment product out there. But as an industry, we don't stand up and say it.

Being urban and making urban games

Sam: It isn't as thought out as it may seem. It just fits with the theme of the games we're making. It has more to do with the films and music we like. When you're making games you want them to be about something you understand. I'd love to make a game about Westerns, but I don't know anything about them. This stuff is all around. When you live in New York City, you walk around and get ideas.

Sweet success

Terry: For us, making games is about being able to get up in the morning. When you're out doing something that you'd do if you weren't getting paid, it doesn't feel like work. If you go to work and you *want* to go to work, you're sorted.

Sam: I think you have to have a vision for what you are trying to make. And there are some companies out there that try to make games that appeal to everyone. But you just can't do that. If I spend my time trying to plan to make a game popular, it would never work.

GAMES AS ART

Art as games

Terry: It depends on your definition of art. If the medium that subject matter is delivered in is so technically or creatively impressive that you stop and think before you get to the subject matter, then it's art. Say, if you take photographs. Your family snaps don't make you think about art. You just go straight to looking at Johnny playing in the paddling pool. But if you look at something by Irving Penn or Herb Ritts, you start to think, "Wow, that's a staggering image." There are a couple of mental moments between you and the subject matter. You're not particularly interested in the model or the landscape. You *like* it, but it's how it gets you there. That for me is where photography stops being a craft and starts being an art. Same thing with a game. With a film, with music. When it's put together so well that you stop talking about the storyline, or how many points you got or how many dollars you amassed, and start to think about the process between you and those things. But then, if there's too much obsession with that, then it's like the pretentious people who watch the movie credits. Just go the f—k home.

Sam: Art's a dangerous word, but GTA3 does things differently in the way you interact with it. It makes you feel cool. The guy you play with does cool things. He beats people up in the street, he says things to them and they say things back and he punches them and pulls out his Glock. I can't explain it.

Terry: There's significance to the fact that he can't explain it.

Sam: It just makes me *feel* different.

The business of art

Terry: There's always the kind of starving artist voice in any artform. There's nothing stopping people from making life-alteringly beautiful, staggering, mind-blowing games, and putting them out on a platform. But, then again, the variants of creating something in the video-game industry, financially, are so much more than writing a book or recording music. You cannot get something cheap onto a console.

On great ideas

Sam: I think there's a whole trend of being invited onto a panel with other industries [music, film, etc.] to share ideas. And I'm like, F—k you. I'll keep mine, thanks. The world is getting so incredibly overcommercial and the art is being taken out of this kind of stuff, particularly when you start to do too many focus groups. You go ask people, "Whaddaya want?" And they tell you. But the greatest stuff is made by lunatics who say, "I really think we should make a game about this or a movie about that." We feel passionately about what we do. I'm sure you could get a lot richer going the other way, but I'm into having a sort of expression coming from this medium. It's a question of: What does the United States of America want to play? Well, I'm going to come up with some ideas and see what happens.

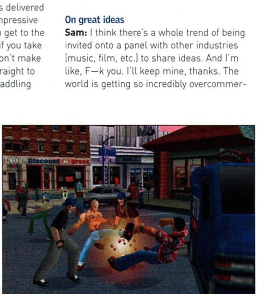
Doing things for the first time

Sam: We've had opportunities recently to go into film or go back into the record business, but making something like this is where we want to be. It's the most exciting thing around. We're honored to be doing it.

Terry: Why would you want to be on the back end of an industry when you could be doing everything for the first time? You really do feel like you're breaking new ground.

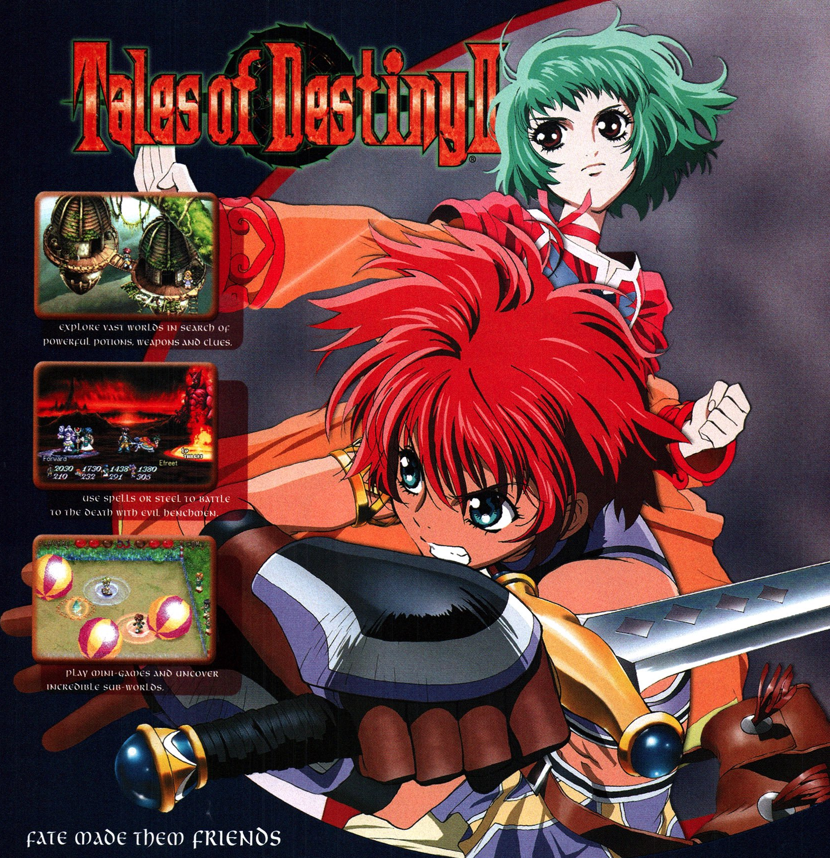
Sam: Rockstar's not going to look at what other companies are doing and think: We need to do a Ski-doo game, or something in the water with a jet. We're about making games with a lot of our personalities in the game. Whether or not anyone likes it, we like having our thumbprints on it. When people buy it, they know that a lot of our love and attention has gone into it. What would I do if I didn't do this?

I love making these games so much. It draws on every single skill from commercial making and music-video making, and then you bring in the technology. It's f—king hardcore. A serious business in the making.



State of Emergency: Break a window, throw a brick, kick a guy. Riots never looked this good.

Tales of Destiny II®



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destiny will make them legends.

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The heroes must battle not only the challenges of an unknown force,

but also the demons that exist within themselves.

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Mild Animated Violence
Use of Tobacco and Alcohol

PlayStation

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Z.O.E. Anime Headed for the U.S.

AD Vision will be releasing the Z.O.E. Japanese Anime DVD in the U.S. later this year. ADV has also obtained the rights to the Z.O.E. animated TV series, but there's no word on when it'll air here. www.advfilms.com

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JOHN SCALZI

THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING "M"

Here's an interesting story: In late May, MarketCast, a show-business research firm, trotted out some numbers which suggested that movie companies lost ticket sales every time they released an R-rated film. Thanks to constant pressure from parents and politicians, movie theaters are now actually beginning to enforce R ratings, and blocking the underaged from seeing flicks like *Saving Silverman* or *Freddy Got Fingered*—films which, despite the restricted rating, are clearly designed to be seen by the young (no word on how much these two films lost at the box office because they, you know, stunk up the room like a dead raccoon). Studios have also stopped advertising R-rated films as aggressively to kids (again, as a result of parental and political pressures), so there's also less awareness of the flicks in the first place.

Don't think Hollywood studios haven't noticed the hit—watch the release of upcoming teen-oriented films, and you'll find fewer and fewer of them get by with an R rating. That "R" is getting between the studios and their box-office receipts, and that's just not something they're going to let continue.

Why do I bring this up? Because what's happening now to movies is likely to happen to video games as well. Pressure is already on game makers from parents and legislators—on the way they depict violence and market their Mature-rated titles—and now video-game retailers are beginning to more aggressively enforce policies that restrict selling M-rated games to the young. Just as the movie studios are toning down their films to reach a larger audience, game designers will have to ask themselves: Is it worth it to code in blood and gore if by doing so, I end up decreasing my sales? Ultimately, video games are a business; games will follow where money is to be made.

Mind you, this isn't necessarily a bad thing. Speaking as a former full-time film critic, I can tell you authoritatively that many R-rated teen films I've seen wouldn't have been harmed in the slightest by clipping off the occasional swear word or covering up some nipples. They weren't there to help the story, anyway—they were just there to give a 15-year-old boy a thrill. In the same way, a fair number of overly bloody M-rated games probably wouldn't find their gameplay drastically affected if their gore was eased up.

In some circumstances it could even be a good thing. Game designers would have to defend their artistic choices, and perhaps some of the creative energy that might have gone into portraying a fountain of blood will now go to making sure the game has solid play value. After all, they won't be able to just give the kids a thrill with arterial spurts. There'll have to be something else to keep their attention.

However it plays out, gamers should pay attention. That "M" rating is likely to become a bit more scarce. Soon.

John Scalzi is a freelance writer and media critic who also runs GameDad, a video game site for parents. Visit it at www.gamedad.com.

PLAYSTATION APTITUDE TEST

1. NCAA Football 2002 features how many teams (excluding unlockable ones)?
a. 112
b. 117
c. 144
d. 162

2. Which of the following will not actually come with every copy of Resident Evil–Code: Veronica X, contrary to previous reports?
a. Approximately 10 minutes of extra cinematics
b. "The Wesker Files"
c. A demo of Devil May Cry

3. What was the original title for Yanya Caballista: City Skater?
a. Yanya Caballista featuring Gawoo
b. Gawoo: City Skater
c. Gawoo featuring Yanya Caballista
d. Gawoo featuring Yanya Caballista: City Skater

4. The Japanese version of Dance Dance Revolution: Disney Mix (and hopefully the American version, too, when it debuts in October) does not feature a remade, more danceable version of which of these oldies?
a. "Surfin' USA"
b. "Johnny B. Goode"
c. "Macho Duck" (to the tune of "Macho Man")
d. "I Wanna Hold Your Hand"

5. As seen on page 73, Saliva is contributing a remake of the *Peter Gunn* theme to Spy Hunter. Which of these games features music from the band's latest album?
a. MX 2002 featuring Ricky Carmichael
b. CART Fury
c. Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX
d. Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX: Maximum Remix

6. Who is the composer for *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within*?
a. Nobuo Uematsu
b. John Williams
c. Elliot Goldenthal
d. Kyoko Yamashita

7. Which of the following extreme sports is not featured in Tarzan Untamed?
a. Surfing
b. Bungee jumping
c. Cliff diving
d. Water skiing

8. What does Eidos' upcoming game E.O.E. stand for?
a. Eve of Extinction
b. End of Everything
c. East of Eden
d. Ear of Eugene

9. If you played "The Name Game" (as in Shirley Ellis' hit 1965 classic song) with Ico, which of these would you at one point come up with?
a. Fo-Beeko
b. Fo-By-Ko
c. Banana-Fana-Fo-Feeko
d. Banana-Fana-Fo-Fy-Ko

10. Who are the three commentators in Madden 2002?
a. John Madden, Pat Summerall and James Brown
b. John Madden, Chuck Berry and James Brown
c. John Madden, Pat Summerall and Lee Corso
d. John Madden, Pat Summerall and Jerry Glanville

Answers
1.c **2.**b **3.**a **4.**d **5.**a
6.c **7.**c **8.**a **9.**c **10.**a

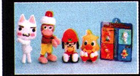
DATA STREAM

Finally! Tactics

PlayStation
FINAL FANTASY TACTICS
SQUARESOFT

Sony has heard the cries of gamers and has rereleased the hard-to-find Final Fantasy Tactics as a Greatest Hit.

Fries With That?

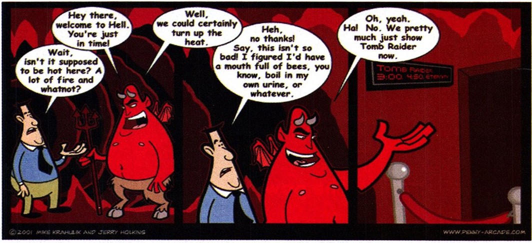


Sony has teamed up with McDonald's in Japan for a "Summer of PlayStation." Inside all happy meals come cool toys like the ones pictured above. Lucky!

Crash Sets Sail

This August, Crash will be making some waves in the 32nd French Solitaire du Figero. Vivendi Universal Interactive has chosen Crash to adorn its sponsored boat in the race.

WWW.PENNY-ARCADE.COM


Hey there, welcome to Hell. You're just in time!
Wait, isn't it supposed to be hot here? A lot of fire and whatnot?
Well, we could certainly turn up the heat.
Heh, no thanks! Say, this isn't so bad! I figured I'd have a mouth full of bees, you know, boil in my own urine, or whatever.
Oh, yeah. Ha! No. We pretty much just show Tomb Raider now.
TOMB RAIDER 3:00 4:50 ETERNITY
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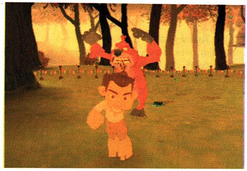
PlayStation®2

The power could go to your head.



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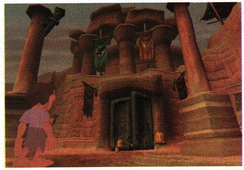
Control 12 species of unruly creatures, each with their own intellects, personalities and behavior patterns.

Embark on an original adventure designed for the next-generation gamer.



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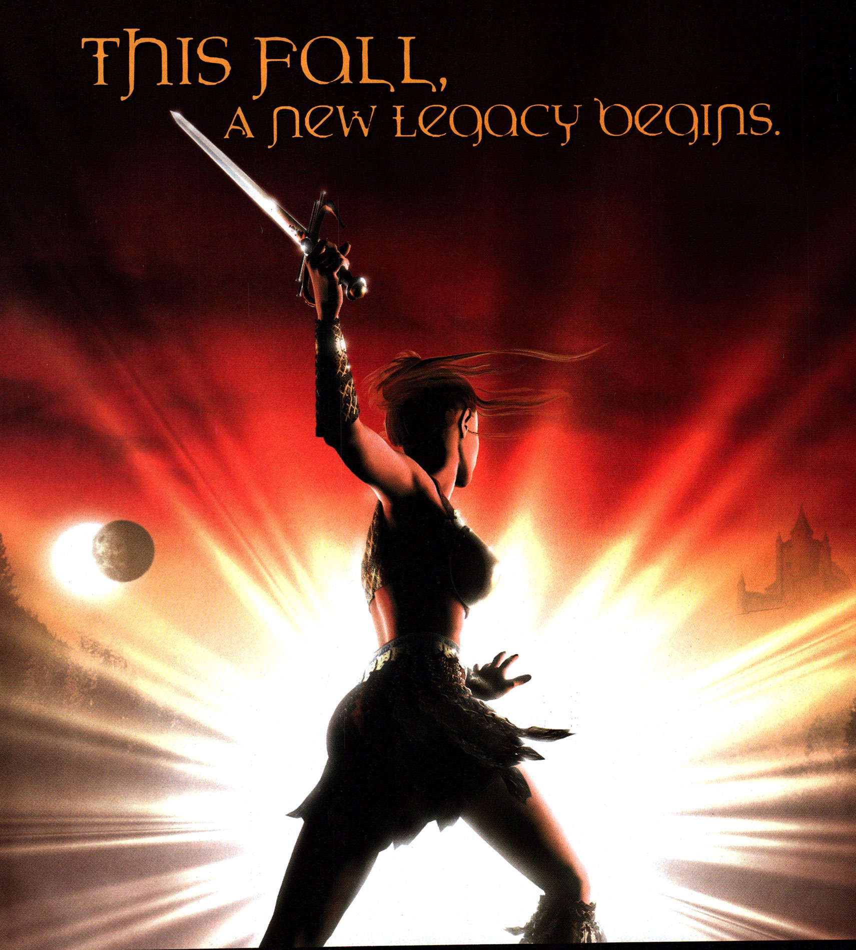

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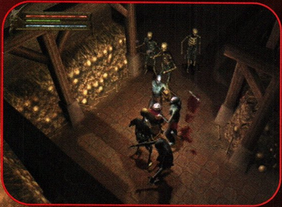
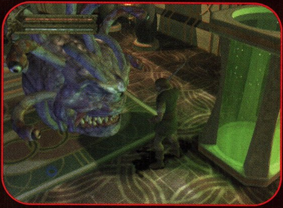
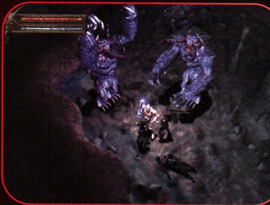

HACK YOUR WAY THROUGH COUNTLESS OPPOSITION


ENCOUNTER MYSTICAL BEASTS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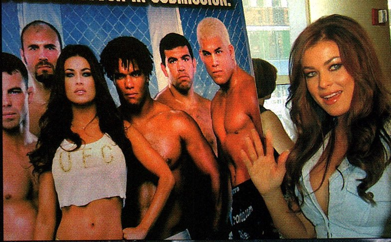
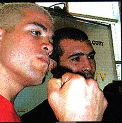
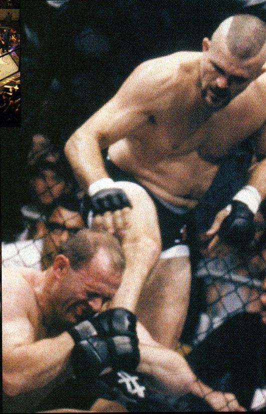
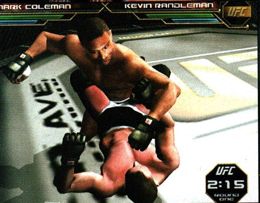

IN SUBMISSION.

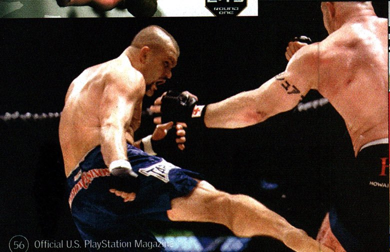
BLOOD SPORT

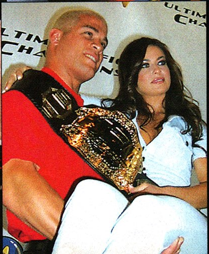
The UFC takes the fighting game to the next level











Blood is dripping down the faces of the two fighters, spattering onto the mat, staining the ground with rusty patches. Just a moment before, Semmy Schilt, the 6' 11'', 256-pound Dutchman, threw a kick at the 6' 3'', 250-pound Josh Barnett, who caught Schilt's leg and reversed the move, turning it into a takedown. Barnett then worked his way into a side mount, and the two heavyweights began to smack, punch and swat at each other. A hit to the eye, a blow to the nose, and blood begins to flow liberally, clouding the vision of the fighters while raising the bloodlust of the crowd. Enthralled, the 12,000 spectators at UFC 32 at the Meadowlands in New Jersey, jumped from their seats, some shouting at the fighters, some groaning, others wildly gesticulating, all captivated by the furious action in the Octagon. Then, just four minutes and 21 seconds into the first round of this brutal bout, Barnett locked Schilt into a painful armbar, decisively ending the match.

Such was my introduction to the Ultimate Fighting Championship, the league of choice for mixed martial arts, which combines any and every type of combat discipline, from jiu-jitsu to kickboxing to sumo wrestling. Once an underground spectacle, the UFC now has a sizable following, one that's growing by the day. Recognizing the sport's potential, Crave published a well-received, top-selling UFC Dreamcast game last year. (The PS one version was a dud, though.) And with a PS2 UFC game due out early next year, I thought I'd see a fight firsthand and find out what all the fuss is about.

At its best, UFC matches combine the spectacle of the WWF, the athleticism of boxing, the skills of the martial arts, and the balletic grace of a Hong Kong action flick. Several fights at UFC 32 featured spectacular takedowns, brilliant reversals, well-timed knees to the chin and quick-flying feet and fists. Although I found myself increasingly absorbed as the night went on, I still couldn't shake the feeling that this is hardcore stuff—perfect fodder for an overzealous congressman to bolster his case against violence in the media and society. When I raised this concern to some of the fighters, they were all quick to respond.

"People who think it's too brutal, they just don't understand the sport," says light heavyweight Chuck Liddell, one of the coverboys for Crave's UFC games. "It's a pure competition. Now if you're against fighting sports at all, then you've got a different argument. But boxing is the same thing. And I think you take more long-term damage boxing than doing this. Some of those guys win fights, but you look at the punch stats, and they got hit 300 times in the head. Three *hundred* power shots to the head. That *can't* be good. And that doesn't happen in this sport."

Tito Ortiz, the light heavyweight champ and the other coverboy for the games, credits Crave's titles for helping dispel some of the misconceptions about the UFC. "The games are making us more visible in people's houses, showing that it's normal, that we're not a freak show anymore," Ortiz says. "We're actually athletes competing. We've finally got that stigma out of people's minds. We've worked hard to accomplish that, and I think we're doing a tremendous job of it."

> **"Playing video games is hand-to-eye-coordination training. And that helps those guys fight."**
>
> **—Jeff Barnhart**

Jeff Barnhart, the producer for the video games, agrees. "A long time ago, before the UFC turned into the big thing it's becoming, there were no rules, no time limits," he says. "But now there are so many rules that it's actually like a real sport. You don't have to worry about it being super-violent."

Carlos Newton, the UFC welterweight champion, is more philosophical when it comes to this concern. "My definition of violence: physical manifestation of negative emotion," he says, suggesting that UFC fights don't even qualify as violence—a notion reinforced by the palpable camaraderie among the fighters. From what I saw, this sport is short on the staredowns, but long on mutual respect and admiration among the athletes.

Still, these guys do beat each other up for a living. And as Ortiz readily admits, "There's no fun in getting hit." But what's it like when you're doing the same thing in a video game? Or, say, seeing yourself getting pummeled in the games? That's gotta be painful, right? "Nah," says Ortiz, "it's only a video game."

An apt statement, given the mixed reviews for the first round of UFC games. Both the Dreamcast and PS one games suffered from a laundry list of shortcomings: a computer AI that was way too tough, matches that ended too quickly, far too much button-mashing, and fights that often degenerated into grappling fests, with little to no striking involved. This time around, though, Barnhart hopes the PS2 version will be much more than "only a video game." In fact, Barnhart concedes that those games were rushed, and that Crave has learned a lot from those efforts.

Thanks to the power of the PS2, Crave can now create a noticeably more detailed game. First off, the character models boast a polygon count that almost doubles the Dreamcast's (5,800 vs. 2,500). And the atmosphere has been boosted to the max. Fighters, for instance, will have elaborate entrance sequences, entourage on hand, corner men helping cheer them on during the matches. "Technically, we can make things look fantastic on the PS2 game," Barnhart says.

But the upgrades are more than just cosmetic. To beef up the gameplay, the developers are adding a wider range of moves and positions. "Instead of just being able to push a guy down and be on top of him, kind of perpendicular to the guy, you'll actually be able to do a side mount, where you'll be parallel to the other guy," Barnhart says. "You'll be able to swap in between different mounts." Crave is also building up the striking moves, throwing in lots more boxing, kickboxing and karate-style actions. The AI has been toned down as well. "Because we're putting so much more depth into the modes of play, we're working on making sure there's a good curve of difficulty," Barnett says.

Barnett is especially proud of the enhanced Career mode, which lets you build up a fully customizable character who starts off with a limited set of moves. "The great thing about UFC is all the different styles of fighting and how the fighters mix and match them together," Barnhart explains. "So as a minigame training mode you'll be able to go and spar with the masters of different fighting styles. Say you spar with the jiu-jitsu master. You beat him, you learn some jiu-jitsu moves. Those can now be unlocked and added to your arsenal." Meanwhile, for the casual gamer the PS2 title will feature several pick-up-and-play modes, from standard arcade fights to a multiplayer round-robin tournament.

Since Crave has taken pride in accurately representing the sport, I asked the pros what they thought of the games so far. "The games captured everything well," says Ortiz. Liddell is a bit more critical. "It's really good," he says. "Except I do have ground moves—I'd like to tell the designers, 'Please, I can wrestle on the ground.' My guy has no submissions whatsoever. Give me some ground. I'm a balanced fighter—that's why I'm as good as I am."

Because his UFC fights have all been won through striking moves, Liddell believes that Crave didn't give his character enough grappling skills. That will change, though, thanks to some exhaustive research. The developers are not only studying tapes of all the fighters' matches—both within and outside of the UFC—but they'll also tag along during their training sessions, video taping the fighters as they work on *all* their moves. "Chuck is one of the guys we'll be taping soon, hopefully," Barnhart says. "We give those tapes to the animators, and they just sit there and study them, and try to re-create them in the game."

As for Newton, his only complaint is the control scheme. An avid gamer, Newton would like to see more Street Fighter-style maneuvers and less Tekken-esque button-mashing. But Barnhart says the controls will stay similar to the past versions. "I personally think the controls we have are rock-solid," he says.

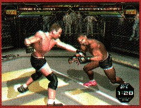
The games may be accurate, but are they realistic enough to be used as a training aide, something to help you prepare for the fights? "Absolutely," Barnhart claims. "The fighters right now do that with the old games. Playing video games is hand-to-eye-coordination training. And that helps those guys fight."

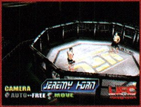
Well, not *all* the fighters. While Ortiz loves the games, he plays them to escape from what he does—"just to kick back and keep my mind off of fighting," he says. Same goes for Liddell. For Newton, though, it's a different story. He says the games are great mental training. "They put the tendencies of the fighters into the game—the grapplers, the throwers—so you're always remembering that you have to respect this person's grappling game, things like that," he says. "It helps focus you."

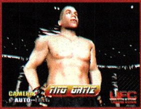
Staying focused is a big concern for the fighters these days, especially with the UFC emerging from the shadow of its underground past, the games growing in popularity, and the fighters finding themselves on the verge of multimedia stardom. At a recent press conference, the UFC announced a deal to put the sport back on cable TV, along with the imminent sanctioning of the league in Las Vegas, easily the most important venue for a sport of this kind. Also at that conference was Carmen Electra, who announced that she'll be appearing in a series of print ads and other marketing materials, promoting the sport. Which, of course, raises the question: Will the UFC's newest star also appear in the game, maybe as an unlockable character?

"I think that is one of the coolest ideas," Barnhart chuckles. "Heck, I wanna engineer that deal just so I can meet her!"

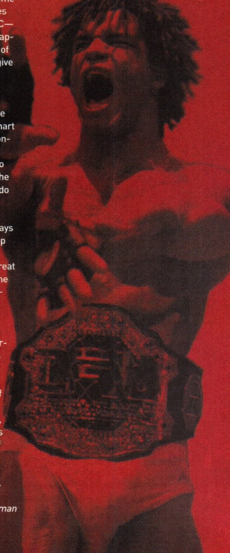
—Gary Steinman







First screens from the PS2 UFC game, which is still very early in development. We'll have even more screens for you next month.



PlayStation 2
EVERYONE
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CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
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Triple Crown SNOWBOARDING
WAKEBOARD EDITION
MasterCraft
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Winter. It's just better.

Cool Boarders® 2001. Ride massive arcade style courses against real world class pros like Todd Richards, Tara Dakides, Kevin Jones and Michele Taggart. Sure, it's not exactly winter. But it might make summer feel better. Rest up. It's gonna be a long season.

CoolBoarders® 2001

TIME 3:31:03
SCORE 2300
MPH 47
COMBO 3
1656
SINGLE FLIP
720
STALEFISH TWEAK

Jeremy Jones casually tweaks a switch 1440 stalefish over a 70 foot+ cliff band.

TIME 0:23:76
MPH 43
3rd

Amateur rider Trent covers huge distance with this late 180 tail grab in Canada.

TIME 2:23:36
MPH 64
4th
Cool Boarders 2001

Blinding speeds and endless combinations are Tara Dakides key to boardercross.

TIME 3:13:16
SCORE 5691
MPH 46
COMBO 1
252
180
BACKSIDE
180 + BACKSIDE

Todd Richards gets big style points with this inverted backside 180 in the Highland Half Pipe.

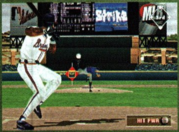
TIME 0:15:33
MPH 55
3rd

Kevin Jones grabbing stalefish over powder transitions.

PlayStation

MLB 2002

Total Control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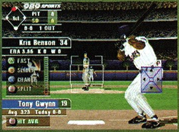
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EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

PLAYERS CHOICE

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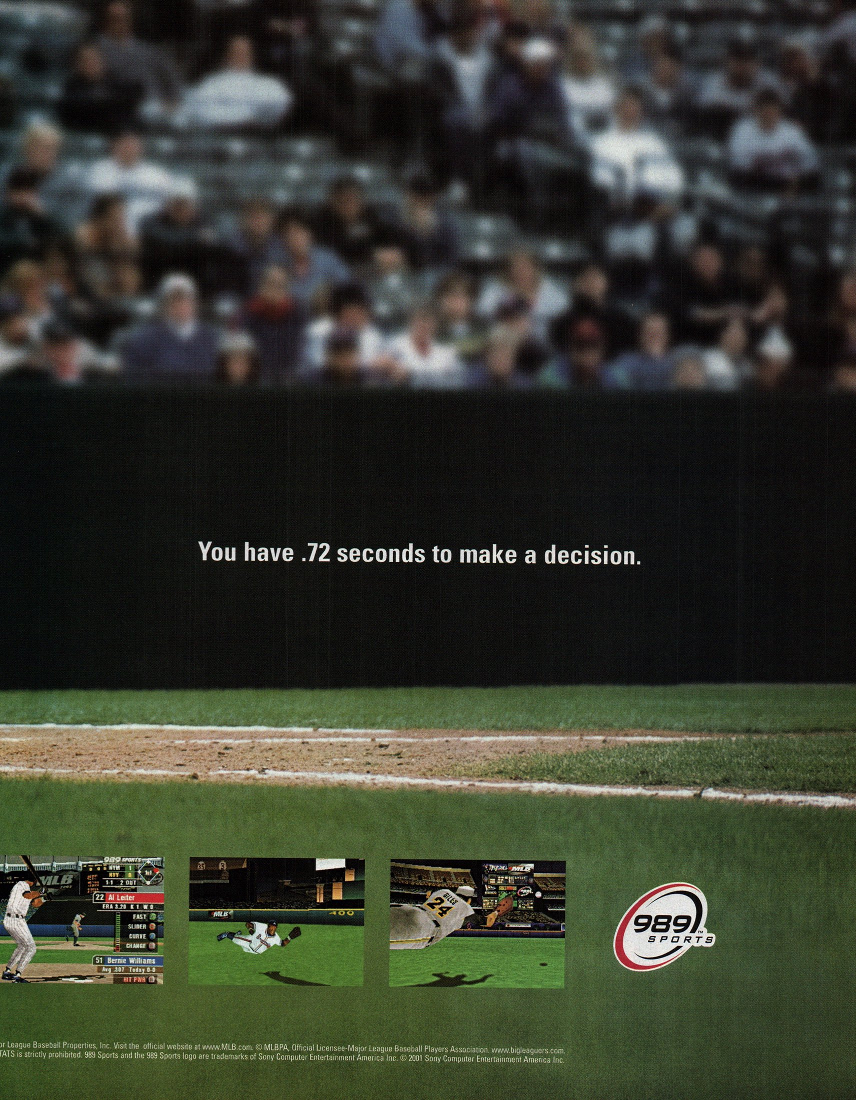
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22 Al Leiter
ERA 3.20 K 1 W 0
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CURVE
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51 Bernie Williams
Avg .307 Today 0-0
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GILES
989 SPORTS

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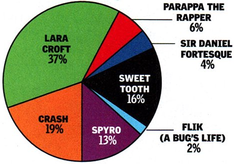
PS UNDERGROUND ONLINE POLL

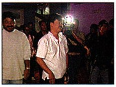
Who Would You Most Like to Trade Places With for a Day?

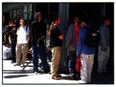


Total Responses: 22,075. Poll taken on 6/21/01

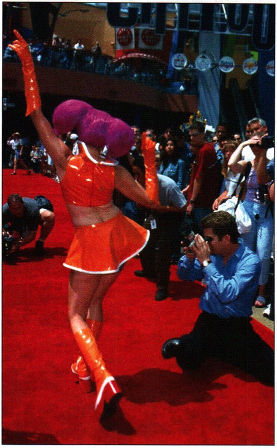
SQUARE HOSTS FINAL FANTASY DAY

In order to celebrate the launch of *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within* along with the release of Final Fantasy Chronicles, Square recently held a Final Fantasy Appreciation Day at Sony's high-tech Metreon mall in San Francisco. The event, which gave gamers the opportunity to win free tickets to the movie and bid on rare Final Fantasy merchandise, was also the first public demonstration of Final Fantasy X in the U.S. (Not surprisingly, FFX had tons of people freaking out.) The turnout was massive (lines wrapped around the block), and several gamers showed their spirit by dressing up as popular Final Fantasy characters. But the best surprise of all was that Final Fantasy creator (and director of the movie) Hironobu Sakaguchi even made an appearance.



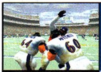
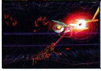


Sega Gets Ready To Strut Its Stuff



Now that Sega is producing games for multiple platforms, the company has one goal in mind: to become the No. 1 software publisher by the end of 2002. Bigger than Sony. Bigger than EA. Bigger than everyone. An achievable goal, perhaps, but one that will take some very aggressive moves on Sega's part. Sega will have to choose its titles wisely to maximize profits. Fortunately for us, the PS2, as the clear leader in the new console race, is integral to Sega's strategy. Which is why we're getting big-name games like Virtua Fighter 4 exclusively.

But while we've heard of a handful of titles headed to the PS2 in the coming year, Sega is currently planning plenty more—in fact, a majority of Sega's future efforts will be focused on the PS2. "We're a little bit behind the 8-ball on the PS2," Sega president Peter Moore admits, "because our new competitors have got an 18-month headstart on us. But we're smart guys and we'll catch up." Although many of Sega's PS2 projects are still being kept secret, we've put together a list of announced games to whet your appetite.

	NAME	WHAT'S THE STORY	RELEASE	THE LOWDOWN
	**NFL 2K2**	Sega's flagship sports title is about to go head to head with Madden this year—but on the same platform. The NFL 2K games were a success on the Dreamcast, but can they do the same on PS2?	Fall	This series is in a lot of ways superior to Madden. We're betting on Sega this year.
	NBA 2K2	Save for NBA Street, the PS2 has been home to some rather subpar hoops games. NBA 2K is another already-great franchise that's now headed to the PS2 and is poised to go against EA's Live.	Fall	Dare we say it? It looks like Sega may outperform EA on the b-ball court as well.
	ToeJam & Earl 3	Starring two hip aliens, the ToeJam & Earl games were loads of fun on Sega's Genesis platform years ago, thanks to their funky tunes and humorous elements. The original creators are working on part 3.	Summer 2002	Just imagine the upgrade the PS2 can offer over the 16-bit Genesis! We're quite excited.
	Space Channel 5	Space Channel 5, featuring Sega's hip dancing space reporter Ulala, is one of the more unique titles from Sega. It bombed on the Dreamcast, but perhaps the PS2 market can help it succeed.	Spring 2002	This game has a great style (not to mention Ulala's hot!), so we're hoping it does well.
	Ecco the Dolphin	Ecco the Dolphin is one of those great Sega franchises that started on the Genesis and was recently reborn. The Dreamcast version of Ecco looked great, but it was frustrating as hell.	Summer 2002	Sega's got the visuals down. If they can get the gameplay right this time, they've got a winner.
	Ferrari F-355	This Ferrari racing game from AM2 (the guys who also did Virtua Fighter) is about as realistic as you can get. Perhaps a little *too* realistic. Sega is planning a straight port of the arcade original for PS2.	Spring 2002	Let's hope they've got a good developer porting it, because we want this baby exact!
	Virtua Fighter 4	For the first time ever, Virtua Fighter will land on a platform other than Sega's. AM2 is experienced with multiple processor systems (like the PS2), so this game is likely to look simply stunning at home.	Spring 2002	From what we've seen so far, VF4 looks better than Tekken 4. Proof is in the play, though.
	**Rez**	Also coming from the Space Channel 5 team is this incredibly fascinating music-based shooter. Shoot enemies in chain reactions to create musical melodies. Interested? We sure as heck are.	TBA	Sega better bring Rez to the U.S. That's all we're going to say.

INSIDE THE INDUSTRY:

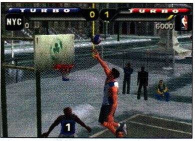
GAME ARTIST

EA Big's recent hit, NBA Street, has more imagination than any sports game on the market. One of the many facets that set it apart was the use of urban environments for a traditionally indoor basketball experience. We caught up with Mike Young, one of Street's environment artists, to discover the process of creating environments that capture the excitement of streetball. Here's what he told OPM:

"Sometimes I'm questioned about whether I'm primarily an artist first or a video-game artist. But, honestly, I don't see a difference between the two. I love games and I love art, so I don't feel like I'm betraying my art. Plus more people get to enjoy what I've done.

"I graduated with a degree in electronic media—an art degree with a fancy name. At the outset, I just wanted to do any game art. I would've jumped at the chance to do something lame like Dave Coulier's Crazy Moped Racing (that's Joey from *Full House*). Then I landed with a developer: NuFX. It was a perfect fit since I've always loved sports games. So working on NBA Street was a stroke of luck I couldn't have imagined. And with Street there was a lot of room to be creative. In simulation sports, the arenas are a bit static. Everyone knows what Madison Square Garden is supposed to look like. But with these urban environments I had a lot of room to create.

"A lot of being a game artist is very technical. Game artists get a bad rap, like we're inferior to movie special-effects people, which isn't necessarily the case. It ends up taking a lot of creativity to make things look good on a limited budget."



Step One: PREPRODUCTION

"With Street all of the environment artists were first assigned levels by the producers and lead artists. Sometimes it was really specific, like in the case of Rucker Park (which is a real place). Other times they had a general checklist of things they wanted: Boston schoolyard, afternoon, winter, snow piles. It was up to me to present the best way to do it.

"The research was different for each locale. It's best if I get to go to the locales to get source material with a digital camera. With Rucker Park I was given video footage of the court, and I watched *On Hallowed Ground* (a TNT special about Rucker Park). The Internet and the library are also good places to look for pictures. For Boston I went to the library and dug up some architectural books. I wanted it to look as authentically Beacon Hill as possible.

"Once the locale is set and there's source material, I created sketches and mockups. I like to create an overhead sketch, which is basically a blueprint. It helps with scale and object placement. Sometimes it also helps to do a quick 3D mockup using primitive objects. Then, ideas between the lead artists and environment artists are thrown back and forth and adjustments are made."

Step Two: PRODUCTION

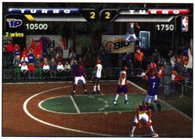
"Once I was given the green light, I started building the geometry. I began with the court and backboards and worked outward using the drawings and source to place objects in the scene. It's important to build things as efficiently as possible because there are polygon budgets. Sometimes you 'fake' a model, if you can. For example there's no need to model a chain-link fence when a texture will work fine. But it *looks* like a model.

"It's essential to remember that the system's limits determine everything. It's not possible to have trees where every leaf is geometry, and there can't be real-time reflections and shadows everywhere. I had to choose where I wanted the detail. Sure, we wanted 100 different cars driving up and down the streets, but that meant something else has to be sacrificed for the game to run at 60 frames per second. Environments aren't the focus of the game—the characters are. So right off the bat, I had less to work with.

"Once I had the geometry built I began painting textures. Creating the textures can be time-consuming but they're very important. Basically, textures are 2D images mapped onto 3D objects. A building is just a gray box to start off, but then bricks, windows, grime, etc., are all combined to become part of the texture map to make it look like a building. To me the most important thing is to notice details and put them in your maps.

"Lighting is the next step. Its importance is often underrated. The basic goal of lighting is to create depth and mood. A combination of real-time and fake lights are used to achieve your final look. Basically, we have a series of light sources that we place all over the map, like spotlights that we can move wherever we want."

Illustration by Rob Clayton



Step Three: PUT THE ART INTO THE GAME

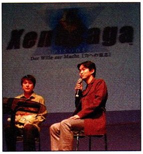
"After I built, textured and lit the environment, the programmers took it. But at this point I was only 50 percent done. Once the artwork was in the game, there were four months of optimizing, bug fixing and polishing.

"It's important, as an artist, to keep in mind that the artwork can look totally different in the game than on a computer monitor. The lighting may be off, or flickering may be occurring, so I had to go back and fix it. Often, the bugs are simple. In the case of a missing texture, it's as simple as a misnamed file. Sometimes a universal change was required, like when the court length changed and all the environments had to be adjusted. Often I had to alter things to conform to the specifications of the game. For example, in Rucker Park, when a player had to inbound the ball, the character would pierce through the barricades surrounding the court. So obviously those barricades had to be moved back.

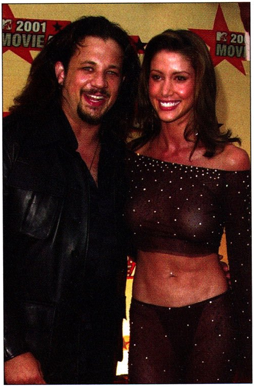
"Final optimizing was done to get the number of polygons and texture sizes as low as possible. It helped gain a few valuable frames per second. The final steps were monotonous, but they were crucial.

"By the time we finished the game, it felt like the project had gone on for an eternity. I was glad it was over. After we had been working on it for over a year, it's rewarding to see someone else look at it with fresh eyes."

Xenosaga Update



Namco recently held a press conference in Japan to discuss its highly anticipated PS2 RPG Xenosaga. The company revealed that the game is actually a prequel to Xenogears (this is part 1, while Xenogears is part 5). Bits of the story have also been divulged: Humans have left Earth because of an alien invasion, and now live in space. However, they're still being hunted and have to resort to creating androids to help fight the alien creatures. The turn-based battles in the game take place, on the actual field map (similar to the Chrono series), and can be avoided (yes!). Xenosaga hits Japan in December and the U.S. next year.



Shannon Elizabeth and boyfriend photo by Steve Granitz/WireImage.com

OVERHEARD

"The PlayStation 2 is the best thing ever. I love kicking my boyfriend's ass."

—Actress **Shannon Elizabeth** (*American Pie 2*, *Scary Movie*) lets us in on her favorite form of release.

AXIS UNVEILED

Upcoming CG movie to be turned into a PS2 adventure

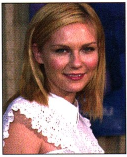


photo by Jean-Paul Aussenard/WireImage.com

Kirsten Dunst provides the voice of Gaina in *Axis*.

Namco and Chaman Productions have revealed what could potentially be a killer movie and game combo for next year: *Axis*. Starring the vocal talents of Kirsten Dunst (*Crazy/Beautiful*, *Spider-Man*) and Angelica Huston (*The Addams Family*), *Axis* is a computer-graphics film project that has been in the works for four years now. Impressed by the film's vision, Namco is creating a PS2 game around it. The two products are now being worked on side by side for a simultaneous release sometime in 2002.

Details on the *Axis* game are scarce, but we hear that the CG environments in the movie will serve as prerendered backdrops for the game. We'll have more on both the movie and the game soon.

PS2 Hard Drive Hits Japan

The 40GB PS2 Hard Drive has finally been released in Japan, and boy has it been selling like hotcakes. The initial shipment of 10,000 units sold out immediately to people who preordered the storage device. Not bad, considering it costs 19,000 yen (approximately $150).

The Hard Drive, which is slated to hit the U.S. this November, allows for data to be stored, but as Sony recently revealed in Japan, it can also perform some other nifty functions. By temporarily placing data in the Hard Drive cache, for example, companies can significantly cut down on load times in their titles. So far, 20 developers are making Hard Drive–compatible PS2 games. Below is a list of the first batch of titles using the Hard Drive in Japan.

	NAME	How Does It Use the Hard Drive?
	Final Fantasy X	Square's highly anticipated RPG is one of the first games to make use of the hard drive's ability to store data cache, allowing for battles to load faster.
	Jade Cocoon 2	The second Jade Cocoon will use the data-cache function for faster loading. It also lets you store monster creations on the hard disk.
	Capcom vs. SNK 2	Loading between battles in fighting games is always such a pain. Capcom's new PS2 fighter uses the data-cache function to solve this.
	Atelier Lillie	This RPG (previewed in *OPM* 42) uses the drive for loading in background data on the fly, allowing for scenes to transfer more quickly.
	A-Train 2001	The popular train-simulation series in Japan allows gamers to store snapshots and level designs on the disk.
	Beatmania 5th Style	Konami's popular music-game series in Japan also uses the HD's data cache storage, proving that a variety of genres can be aided by this function.

DATA STREAM

Tomb Raider Ride

Now that she starred in her own movie, what's next for Lara Croft? Well, how about an amusement-park ride? Tomb Raider The Ride opens in 2002 at Paramount's Kings Island, near Cincinnati, Ohio. You know this can only mean one thing: road trip!

One Crazy Movie

Get this: The latest video-game property about to be turned into a Hollywood flick is Crazy Taxi. It's true. Richard Donner (known for *Superman* and the *Lethal Weapon* movies) is doing the honors of translating the comical taxi driving game to the big screen.

Atari Returns

Now that Infogrames owns Hasbro Interactive (and consequently Atari), expect to see a big return for the Atari brand. Future Infogrames games, such as Stuntman, will carry the Atari logo.

Music Chronicles

Thanks to the success of Final Fantasy Chronicles in the U.S., Tokyopop Soundtrax is releasing a soundtrack for both titles included in the package, Chrono Trigger and Final Fantasy IV. They should be out by the time you read this. Check out www.tokypop.com for more info.

Couples Who Play Together...

Voltaire is a software engineer for a video-game developer. Pat is a culinary student working for a banquet hall. They live in Chicago. Both love games. Here's what they said when *OPM* grilled them about their video-game habit:

Why do you game together?
Pat: It's fun beating his butt. Hehe.
Voltaire: Whatever. I like seeing her cry when she loses. I'm just kidding. We're both kids at heart.

Has gaming enhanced or hurt your relationship?
Pat and Voltaire: Enhanced!
Voltaire: It's not often that you find a girl who is as addicted to video games as you are.
Pat: Hell, I'm probably *more* addicted than he is.

Who's the better gamer?
Pat: Me.
Voltaire: Me.

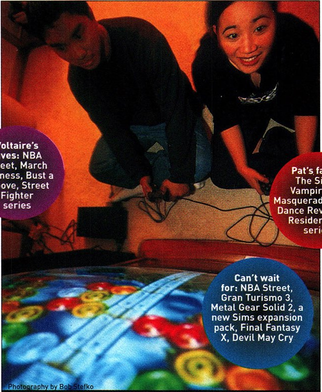
With busy schedules how do you two find time to play games?
Pat: We make it a priority to see each other as often as we can, and we both like playing games.
Voltaire: So when we *are* together we just end up playing games since we can do it together.

If you were in charge of making a game, what type of game would you make?
Voltaire: We've actually thought about this before.
Pat: We thought a game similar to Vampire the Masquerade, but with a sci-fi twist.
Voltaire: RPGs seem like they'd be fun to make.
Pat: Yeah, it's almost like you're in charge of making a movie.

What do you think of celebrities in games?
Pat: I think it's cool. I loved it when Drew Carey was a guest in my Sims house party.

Was there anything you saw from E3 that completely "rocked your world"?
Voltaire: Silent Hill 2. I was so amazed at how realistic it looked. It was so creepy. I'm getting chills just thinking about it now.

...Stay Together



Voltaire's faves: NBA Street, March Madness, Bust a Groove, Street Fighter series

Pat's faves: The Sims, Vampire the Masquerade, Dance Dance Revolution, Resident Evil series

Can't wait for: NBA Street, Gran Turismo 3, Metal Gear Solid 2, a new Sims expansion pack, Final Fantasy X, Devil May Cry

Photography by Bob Stefko

WE WANT YOU!

If you play PlayStation games with your sweetie, we want to hear from you! Here's the deal: Dig up a picture (or take one, why don't you!) of you and your lover playing PlayStation. Shoot it over with an e-mail and a reason why we should pick you. If we do, you're famous. Pretty good deal. If you're going to mail a pic, only send duplicates; materials cannot be returned due to the volume of letters we get. Send stuff to OPM Couples c/o Ziff-Davis Media Inc., PO Box 3338, Oak Brook, IL, 60522-3338, or e-mail us: OPM@ziffdavis.com. If you end up as Couple of the Month you'll get free copies of the mag along with notoriety!

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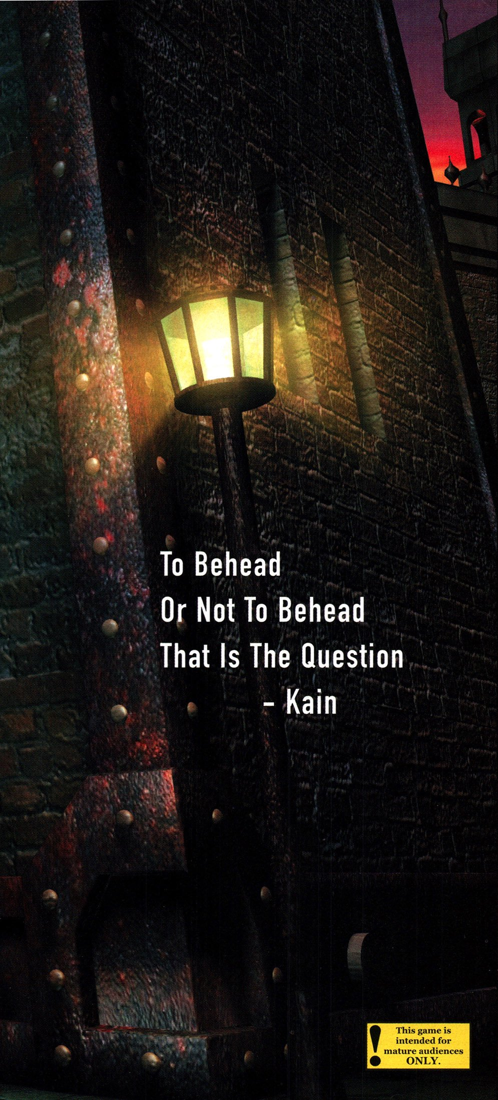

To Behead
Or Not To Behead
That Is The Question
- Kain

XBOX PlayStation 2

Kain, the most evil video game character of all time, is back to reclaim the land of Nosgoth.

Bare-clawed or with weapons, engage your enemies in close combat, then drain their corpses of blood.

Use your Dark Gifts such as possession, rupture and stealth to claim vengeance on your enemies.

THE LEGACY OF KAIN SERIES

BLOOD OMEN 2

HE'S BACK.

www.LegacyofKain.com

This game is intended for mature audiences ONLY.

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Clish MacLaver's
GOSSIP GOSSIP

Gossip, rumor and scandal. Gaming's biggest secrets dug up and served with gravy.

With several hundred games locked in for release between now and the holiday season, the inevitable gossip about what's next is already starting. This month I found some more sequel information for you...and also there's a recap of all the Metal Gear Solid 2 rumors that have surfaced so far. Only three months now before you'll be playing it!

Majestic PS2

The award-winning online "experience" that EA.com is set to launch very soon for the PC is rumored to be up and running on the PS2 AOL network already, and could even end up as a launch title in November. I'll bring you more news soon!

Silent Hill 3 and Beyond

Next month all hell's going to break loose in the *OPM* offices thanks to the fact that Silent Hill 2 is going to be the cover story. There'll be goo and guts all over the place, and the less sturdy members of the team (think: Todd) will no doubt be nurturing their "poor wittle tum-tums" after sitting in front of the puke-inducing visuals. The game's due out in September and will no doubt turn some heads. As you'd expect, the future of the franchise has also been the subject of much discussion, and I've managed to dig up multiple sources that are already hinting at a third game in the series. As you may (or may not) know, Silent Hill 2 doesn't actually follow the first game, but simply uses the same locations. As the franchise evolves, it looks like it's the town that will be the star and a series of games will emerge that tell haunting stories of events happening there. Imagine a spooky TV show that always takes place in the same location, but with different characters, and you'll have an idea of what's coming.

Assuming that the transition of PS2 content to online is quick and smooth, it seems likely that the franchise will become more episodic in nature and that future chapters beyond episode three will be downloaded into a core game available on DVD. Rumor has it that episode three may even be this "core" game, much as the forthcoming Lara Croft project from Core Design is the hub for episodic Tomb Raider content.

> **"Imagine a spooky TV show that always takes place in the same location but with different characters..."**

Teenage Mutant Castlevania Axelay?

More Konami news...expect to see a bunch of announcements at the Tokyo Game Show this fall when the Japanese giant will bring new installments of old classic games to PS2. No specific titles have been mentioned yet, but it seems safe to assume that Castlevania will be an ongoing franchise, especially given how successful the new Game Boy Advance version has been. Imagine how cool a good Contra game could be on PS2! Or, how about a new Axelay all tricked out in 3D? Or how about this—given that there's a new CG *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* movie coming from John Woo (see *Hollywood Banter*), imagine a PS2 Turtles game in the vein of the old classic.

The Dark Reign of 3DO's Army Men Franchise

I mentioned last month that Dark Reign creator Pandemic Studios was working on a PS2 game. Well, I've since learned some new information that might sadden the hearts of diehard Dark Reign fans. Sorry guys, their new game *is* an RTS, but unfortunately it's going to be an Army Men game. In a break from the "design by committee" approach to game development, it seems that 3DO is letting some outsiders in on their burgeoning franchise. Who knows? Chances are this could help turn around the spectacularly damaged reputation of the series. A 3DO rep was recently in our San Francisco offices admitting that the company is keen to "get away from the reputation of milking franchises." It's a bit late for that, mate.

Sonic's PS2 Adventure

A few months ago there were some rumors doing the rounds that Sega would be bringing Sonic to the PS2 as soon as *this* Christmas (how cool would that have been?), but it now seems that hopes of a Sonic Adventure 2 port have been nixed. The good news, though, is that a completely new game is rumored to be in the works at Sega in Japan, which we may see in time for Christmas 2002.

Half-Life 3 Already?

Talk of a third episode in the Half-Life series came to light recently when discussion turned to who actually *owned* the franchise. While Sierra has made an awful lot of money publishing numerous iterations of the first game, and will no doubt do likewise with the sequel next year, it seems that a third game may follow very quickly if the rights revert back to the development team. Does this mean that the sequel could end up being a rushed job just to meet contractual obligations (like we so often see in the music biz)? Who knows? Half-Life developer Valve isn't exactly known for rushing anything. Whatever happens, it seems likely that the series will unfold much more quickly on PS2 than PC gamers have been used to so far.

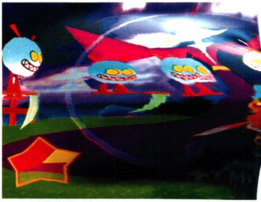
Ray Liotta Has A Game Problem Or Something

Despite being involved in some of the most brutal on-screen beatings in movie history, and also having his brain eaten by a psycho, Ray Liotta apparently draws the line at doing voice work for certain video games. The reason? They're too violent. Hmm. People in glass houses and all that...

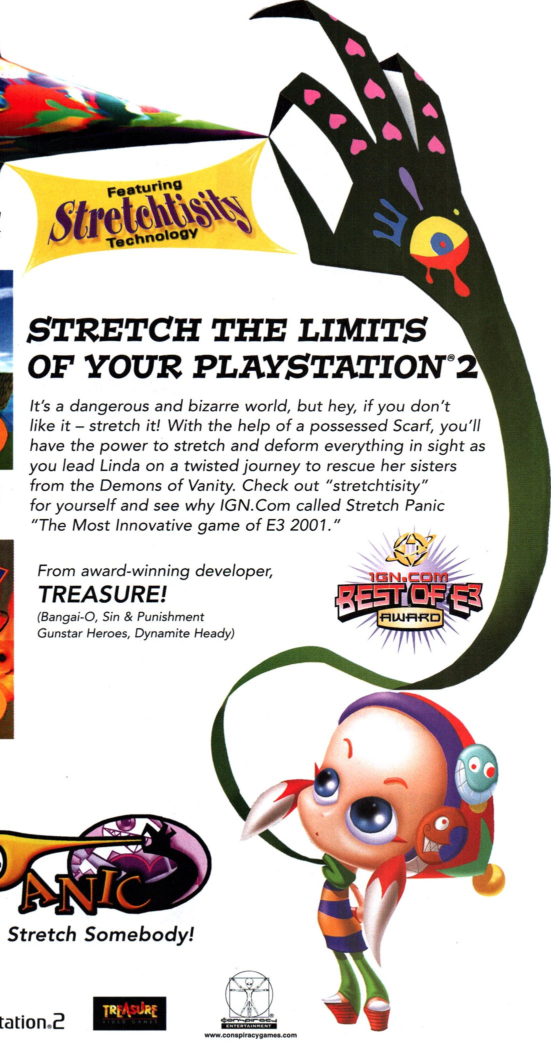
METAL GEAR SOLID 2 WATCH

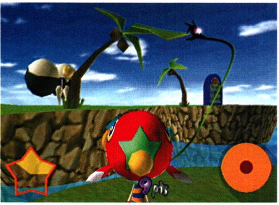
***SPOILER ALERT!* There are so many rumors going around about MGS2 that I thought I'd gather all of them together for you.**

Meryl and Otocon are both very important characters in the new game and rumors persist that you play Meryl in some scenes. • Snake is aging faster than a "normal" human being because of the way he was genetically engineered. • Cutscenes in the final game will all be interactive in some way. Most will allow you to move the camera, others will offer even more freedom. • Rumors still seem to be kicking around that Snake croaks at the end of MGS2, and that the player is directly responsible. • The game is definitely going to be much longer than the previous MGS. • The ninja in the demo at E3 confused people. Chances are they'll be even more confused if the rumors that it's the same guy again are true. • Human cloning plays a big part, and this could explain some of the more confusing bits of plot we're learning. • Much as you may think otherwise, the game isn't all on a ship. • The McFarlane Metal Gear Rey figure may look slightly different to the model used in the game because of some last-minute design tweaks. • As I've reported before, Kojima is keen for this to be the *last* Metal Gear game.



Use the Demon Scarf to deform everything! Your PlayStation®2 computer entertainment system will never be the same.





Manipulate your world! Why get wet when you can swing across using this palm tree?

STRETCH THE LIMITS OF YOUR PLAYSTATION®2

It's a dangerous and bizarre world, but hey, if you don't like it – stretch it! With the help of a possessed Scarf, you'll have the power to stretch and deform everything in sight as you lead Linda on a twisted journey to rescue her sisters from the Demons of Vanity. Check out "stretchtisity" for yourself and see why IGN.Com called Stretch Panic "The Most Innovative game of E3 2001."

IGN.COM BEST OF E3 AWARD

From award-winning developer,

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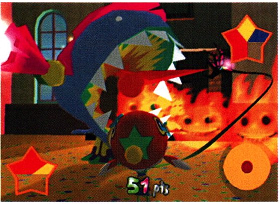
(Bangai-O, Sin & Punishment Gunstar Heroes, Dynamite Heady)



Give enemies a tongue-lashing as you pull and stretch them into submission!

STRETCH PANIC

Reach Out and Stretch Somebody!

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Mild Animated Violence
Suggestive Themes

PlayStation 2

TREASURE VIDEO GAMES

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SPIT TAKE

For the new version of Spy Hunter, Midway has enlisted the services of rap-rockers Saliva—singer Josey Scott, drummer Paul Crosby, bassist Dave Novotny, and guitarists Chris Dabaldo and Wayne Swinny—for a remake of Henry Mancini's classic theme from *Peter Gunn.* We got a chance to chat with them at the recording session.

How did you get this gig?
Josey: Since the beginning, we've always told our record company that we'd like to get creatively involved with movies or video games or anything like that.

How much of the game did you get to see before you agreed?
Josey: We were sent a video tape with some footage of the game, kind of like a trailer. When we got it, we were like, "Holy crap, this is awesome." We were flattered to be asked, but when we saw the video, we were really eager to get involved. When I got here today, and saw that they had a setup with the game and the TV, I was just drawn to it like a zombie. And the trailer can't touch it. It's one of the dopest games I've seen in a long time.

Were you big fans of the original Spy Hunter?
Dave: Yeah, though I was into this just because I thought it was cool doing a song for a game.

Did you take any liberties with the song?
Dave: Quite a few, actually. We put more of a hip-hop beat to it, and just kind of modernized the whole thing.
Josey: They're even going to let me spit some lyrics, which I'm totally honored by. It's like rapping over one of The Beatles' tunes.

So in your band, who's the biggest gamer?
Josey: Paul and Dave are the gamers in this band. I like games, but Dave is the master, he's got them all figured out.
Paul: Yeah, but Dave's only the best if you're betting money. If you're not betting money, you'll beat him. But as soon as you put money on the line, you don't have a chance.
Josey: Yeah. He's a hustler.

Saliva's latest album is called *Every Six Seconds.*

—Paul Semel

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www.bigjimsmgs.com
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www.sweetfancymoses.com
The site "where wit lives." Their obsession is "to build a collective work where intellect, humor and voice come together in orgiastic triple climax." Not too bad.

www.playstation.com
Your e-commerce site for all things PlayStation. Check out the snappy new PS messenger bags!

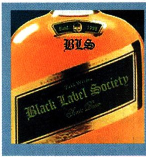
www.gamerankings.com
Check out how all the major gaming mags and Web sites rate any game. An excellent resource.

www.allgame.com
An exhaustive site with reviews all the way back to the Atari 2600. Plus, c.bake used to work there.

Sound Station

By John Scalzi

In this month's edition, we stop in once again to visit with the Gran Turismo 3 soundtrack, and check out some frigid tracks from the slopes of Cool Boarders 2001.

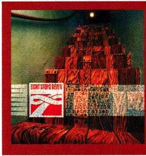


Black Label Society: *Sonic Brew*

Spitfire Records
Featured In: Cool Boarders 2001

What do Ozzy Osborne lead guitarists do when they're done schlepping the Ozzmeister's load? Zakk Wylde's answer: Go out and do the best darn Stone Temple Pilots imitation that you possibly can! *Sonic Brew* has got all the tonal qualities of STP at its darkest and grungiest, and that's not really such a bad thing. Wylde simmers a groove here that should satisfy hard-rock fans. Original? Not really. Good enough? Sure.

Final Score ●●●



Eight Stops Seven: *In Moderation*

Reprise Records
Featured In: Gran Turismo 3: A-spec

In Moderation starts blandly enough, with a couple of tracks indistinguishable from any other gloomy hard-rock outfit out there, but around "Question," the album's third track, the band's voice begins to come through—a rootsy, reflective take on rock that floats somewhere between Creed and Pearl Jam but with enough of its own concerns to make a distinct impression. This one is growing on me.

Final Score ●●●◖

FEAR FACTORY
REMANUFACTURE

Fear Factory: *Remanufacture*

Roadrunner Records
Featured In: Cool Boarders 2001

Just about any one of Fear Factory's blasting techno tracks here makes for perfect video-game background music. While that's just peachy when you're shooting aliens or riding the lip of a virtual tube or whatever, when you're not, it seems like something's missing—like you should be doing something else besides just listening. It makes me wonder why I'm not holding a Dual Shock controller. That can't be right.

Final Score ●●◖

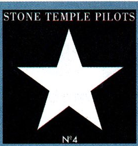
TURBO
Judas Priest

Judas Priest: *Turbo*

Columbia Records
Featured In: Gran Turismo 3: A-Spec

Here's Judas Priest's most socially conscious album, which is to say it was made while Priest was being sued for allegedly enticing a pair of dumbass teens to blow their heads off with one of their songs. *Turbo*'s not one of Priest's better albums; indeed, it's probably the most mainstream, "safe" metal the boys ever did. Certainly nothing that anyone would eat a shotgun to. And isn't that a relief!

Final Score ●●◖



Stone Temple Pilots: *No. 4*

Atlantic Records
Featured In: Cool Boarders 2001

Coming off the band's inventive *Tiny Music* CD, this one is a regression into mostly dark, grungy territory. Why? 'Cause Scott Weiland was spending time in the slammer for drug use, and the band gave their fans some meat and potatoes rock to tide them over until they could get back on the road. Smart planning (such as it was), and a fair enough album, from the thundering crunch of "Down" to the Doors-like meditation of "Atlanta."

Final Score ●●●

John Scalzi's been reviewing music since the time people pretended Rob Halford was straight. Really! They did! Visit his Web page at www.scalzi.com or he'll get all huffy.

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ORIGINAL MOTION PICTURE SOUNDTRACK
FINAL FANTASY
THE SPIRITS WITHIN
MUSIC COMPOSED BY ELLIOT GOLDENTHAL

FINAL FANTASY MOVIE SOUNDTRACK

Although Elliot Goldenthal's stylized orchestrations fit perfectly within the context of the movie, this soundtrack doesn't fare as well when taken away from the film. Some tracks are absolutely brilliant, mixing voice, percussion, brass and strings in a unique and exciting way. But other tracks are so full of tension that they're actually grating. Still, Final Fantasy completists will want to pick this one up, if only for the FFX video preview on the disc.

DVD News

THE WAIT IS OVER, EPISODE I FINALLY COMING TO DVD

We can't argue with eonline.com rating *The Phantom Menace* as the worst sequel of all time. But we can say that the exclusive-to-DVD release might be the biggest redemption since *Shawshank*. Here are the features, for your digestion: seven deleted scenes, a documentary film chronicling the four-year making of the movie, commentary by George Lucas, multi-angled animatics, five featurette documentaries, a production photo gallery, a 12-part Web documentary series, the "Duel of the Fates" music video, the entire print campaign (posters included), all teasers and trailers, all television spots and a Web link exclusive to the DVD. It adds up to six hours. Pretty awesome. But now we're out of breath.

FINAL FANTASY: THE MOVIE: THE DVD

Rumors are swirling that the *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within* DVD will launch this Christmas. Better yet, the DVD will supposedly include outtakes done by the animators in their spare time (much like *A Bug's Life* and *Toy Story 2*). What more can one ask?

BLOOD SIMPLE STAYS SIMPLE

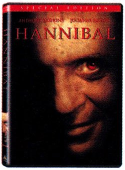
If you're a big Coen brothers fan, it's easy to be disappointed by the lack of extras with their DVD releases. *Blood Simple*, according to dvdfile.com, was originally set to release as a special edition but has since been "downgraded." Expect to see a filmography, a trailer and production notes. But nothing overwhelmingly "special."

ANIMATION STATION: TOLKIEN GOES DVD

It appears that both *The Hobbit* and *Return of the King* will be making their way to DVD. According to DVDPlanet.com they will release on Sept. 11.

DVD Reviews

by John Scalzi



STARRING:
Anthony Hopkins, Julianne Moore

HANNIBAL

Everyone's favorite cannibal chews the scenery—and a couple of people—in this genteelly over-the-top flick. Although too much is unexplained for it to be truly good (how does a world-famous homophagic murderer come into contention for a museum directorship?), Hopkins is delightfully hammy, and Ridley Scott's direction is suitably moody. Julianne Moore's Clarice? She's fine. The two-DVD set is crammed with over a half-hour of deleted scenes, Scott's commentary, five "making-of" documentaries, and some nifty multi-angle interactive featurettes. A new release of *Silence of the Lambs* is also out, and also similarly jammed with goodies. Bon Appetit.

Movie Score ●●● **DVD Extras Score ●●●●◐**

3,000 MILES TO GRACELAND

(Kevin Costner, Kurt Russell)

Hey, you know who makes good Quentin Tarantino films? That's right, Quentin Tarantino. Everybody else sucks at Tarantino films. This late entry into the genre is a case in point—loud, violent and pointless, with the requisite pop irony (in this case, a robbery during an Elvis impersonator convention) failing to make much of an impression. Costner's presence is proof his career has slid into a terminal stage; Russell is not too bad (but then, he's done Elvis before). No DVD extras of note.

Movie Score ●
DVD Extras Score ●

CHOCOLAT

(Johnny Depp, Juliette Binoche)

A town of French prudes is changed when a nice lady opens a chocolate shop. And then they change right back when someone opens a Starbucks! *Chocolat* got a Best Picture nomination, which is a little much, but it's still a pleasant little romantic film, and it's hard to go wrong with Binoche as a warm and sexy confectioner (or with Johnny Depp as her boy pal). DVD has director commentary, deleted scenes and a "making-of" feature.

Movie Score ●●●◐
DVD Extras Score ●●●

ENEMY AT THE GATES
(Jude Law, Ed Harris)

It's the Soviets vs. the Nazis! Who do you want to root for? That's the choice in this flick, in which Jude Law and Ed Harris play snipers going after each other during the Battle of Stalingrad. No, you didn't learn about this battle in school; no Americans in it, you know. French director Jean-Jacques Annaud gives the film an epic scope, and Law and Harris give some tension to their cat-and-mouse battle. Ignore the romance between Law and Rachel Weisz, though. DVD has deleted scenes, a "making-of" feature and a trailer.

Movie Score ●●●
DVD Extras Score ●●◖

FORREST GUMP
(Tom Hanks, Robin Wright)

Oh, you know what this one's about. He's dumb! He changes history! And he doesn't even know it! This is the first film that extensively used computerized special effects to insert characters into past events, but the real special effect is Hanks, who takes a potentially lame character and gives it honest life. A great performance. This edition has two DVDs with director commentary and several "making-of" features on makeup, special effects, sound and set design, and more. Plus, two never-before-seen scenes, screen tests and a photo gallery.

Movie Score ●●●●◖
DVD Extras Score ●●●●◖

CARRIE: SPECIAL EDITION
(Sissy Spacek, John Travolta)

Hey, if you had a bucket of pig's blood spilled on you at the prom, you'd use your psychic powers to kill all your classmates, too. And let's not even talk about the shower scene. There's a lot about this film that doesn't hold up very well (it's 25 years old, you know), but teen cruelty and alienation never go out of style, and this flick's got it—and telekinesis to boot. This special edition has some groovy DVD extras too, including documentaries on the acting and the production design, a feature on author Stephen King, and—get this—a featurette on the "Carrie" Broadway musical. There was one! Really!

Movie Score ●●●●
DVD Extras Score ●●●◖

JOHN CARPENTER 3-PACK
(James Woods, Jeff Bridges)

I've got a soft spot for John Carpenter, whose movies usually are more interesting than the average Hollywood horror slop. This three pack covers his whole range: One really good flick (*Starman*, which is like *E.T.* for grown-ups), one mostly lame flick (the incomprehensively well-regarded *Christine*, based on the Stephen King novel), and one in between (*Vampires*, which features James Woods at his sleazy, grimy best). *Vampires* is a special edition; the other two are just the flicks. These aren't the three I'd pack for a Carpenter retrospective (I'd pick "Starman," the remake of "The Thing" and, of course "Halloween"), but, then, they didn't ask me for my opinion.

Movie Score ●●●
DVD Extras Score ●●◖

JOSIE AND THE PUSSYCATS: SPECIAL EDITION
(Rachel Leigh Cook, Alan Cummings)

Here's the problem: *Josie* was meant to be a satire of that whole "teen band" thing, but it was marketed to the teens who actually, you know, like N'Sync and all that crap, thus assuring that they wouldn't like it, and those who might like it (adults and moody teens) wouldn't be seen dead buying a ticket for it. I mean, DUH. But that Rachael Leigh Cook sure is cute. DVD includes music videos, deleted scenes, director commentary and DVD-ROM goodies.

Movie Score ●●
DVD Extras Score ●●●

THE MEXICAN
(Brad Pitt, Julia Roberts)

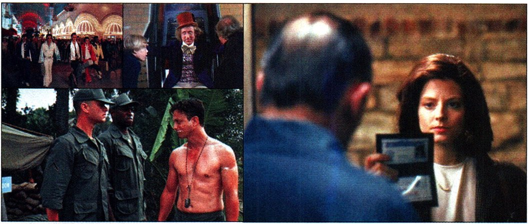
Destined for the Julia Roberts "Cheap DVD" rack at the video store, nestled along *Dying Young* and *Mary Reilly*, this features Brad Pitt as a goofy sleaze trying to retrieve a cursed gun, and Roberts as his cranky, kidnapped girlfriend (kidnapper played by *Sopranos* star James Gandolfini, apparently not in the least concerned about typecasting). There's almost no chemistry between Roberts and Pitt, but lots between Roberts and Gandolfini. Go figure. DVD extras include director commentary, deleted scenes, also with commentary, and an HBO "making-of" feature.

Movie Score ●●●
DVD Extras Score ●●●

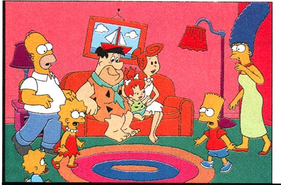
WILLY WONKA AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY
(Gene Wilder, Jack Albertson)

A parable about the venality and stupidity of spoiled children and their parents, complete with Greek chorus, cleverly disguised as a charming kid's film. Of course, the former is why the latter is so good, although, frankly, the Oompa-Loompas still freak the crap out of me. This DVD has some interesting creative variations on its goodies—for example, the commentary track features the actors who played the kids in the film, and it was recorded while they watched the film together for the first time ever. The DVD also features "sing-along" subtitles, so you get up and do your own Oompa-Loompa dance. Doopity-doo, baby.

Movie Score ●●●●
DVD Extras Score ●●●●



3,000 Miles to Graceland, Willy Wonka, Forrest Gump, Silence of the Lambs

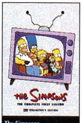


Show Me the D'oh!

There's an argument to be made that *The Simpsons* is the best television series ever, and not just because you'd be hard-pressed to name another series that contributed a word to the Oxford English Dictionary, as the Simpsons did with "D'oh!" However, even the mighty Simpsons had humble beginnings—and on Sept. 25, you can relive their growing pains with a DVD set recapping the first season.

Here's what you notice right off: First, the relatively crappy animation, courtesy of animation house Klasky Csupo (the show switched over to Film Roman after a couple of seasons). When the bottom half of Bart's head goes one direction and the top half goes another, well, that's damn creepy. Then there are the characters' voices, which hadn't quite evolved. And, since this is the first season, Homer, Bart, Lisa and Marge are still being figured out; from the perspective of more than a decade, the 13 episodes seem like rough sketches.

Still, there are classic episodes: "The Call of the Simpsons," which defines Homer as the oaf he is, when he's mistaken for Bigfoot on a family camping trip, or "Krusty Gets Busted," which is the first of many episodes that pits Bart against Sideshow Bob. *The Simpsons* wouldn't totally hit its stride until seasons three and four (in which Conan O'Brien was one of the masterminds of the series), but even in the early years, it still beat the hell out of *The Flintstones*, the previous master of prime-time animation.



The Simpsons
The Complete First Season
Street Date: 9/25/2001
MSRP $39.99

Why get the DVD collection when you can just watch the show in syndication? For one thing, the syndicated episodes are trimmed to pack in more commercials; these are the complete episodes. Plus you'll get commentaries for each episode. The set also comes with an extra DVD that features a "lost" episode, original *Simpsons* shorts from *The Tracey Ullman Show*, outtakes, and TV reports on the early Simpsons craze—you know, when they thought Bart was a bad influence or something. Little did they know *South Park* was on the way. D'oh!

DVD Releases

8/7/2001
An Everlasting Piece
Any Given Sunday: SE
The Mexican

8/14/2001
15 Minutes: Infinifilm Ed.
Josie and the Pussycats

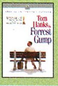
8/21/2001
The Goonies: SE
Hannibal: SE
Silence of the Lambs: SE

8/28/2001
Arms of Strangers
Kramer vs. Kramer
Forrest Gump: SE
Gandhi: SE
See Spot Run

9/4/2001
The Neverending Story

9/11/2001
61*
Basic Instinct: SE
Blood Simple

9/11/2001
Heathers: SE
Citizen Kane: SE



HOLLYWOOD BANTER

More Crouching Tigers?

Michelle Yeoh is up for a second go-around in the fantasy world created by Ang Lee in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon.* According to the actress, interviewed by SciFi.com, Lee is working with writers on a prequel that's likely to go into production as quickly as possible. "At the moment, everybody seems to be over their heads with work, but I've heard that Ang has found a couple of writers, and they're working on another *Crouching Tiger* film. Until he actually comes out and tells us, though, we're sort of in the dark," Yeoh says. "[My] character was so serious and contained, and the prequel would be about the younger couple, about the younger version of Chow [Yun-Fat] and myself. So I'd like to see my character with a sense of humor and love and lightheartedness."

www.scifi.com

Diesel Power!

The muscular showing from *The Fast and The Furious* during its first weekend prompted talk of a swift sequel. The racing flick, which cost $38 million to make, took $40.1 million in its first three days, shunting *Tomb Raider* from the lead and getting movie-industry execs excited about another installment. Without giving too much away if you haven't seen the movie: The closing scene makes a sequel more than possible. The whole movie would also make a perfect game.

www.hotdogmagazine.com

Diaz Is No Angel

The planned sequel to *Charlie's Angels* is under threat after Cameron Diaz reportedly refused to sign on the dotted line. The feisty star has apparently turned down the chance to reprise her role as Natalie Cook in *Charlie's Angels 2.* According to various reports, studio employees believe the main reason could be the constant fighting between Diaz, Drew Barrymore, Lucy Liu and Bill Murray during shooting of the original film. Which leads to the next question: Who should take her place?

Woo Woos Turtles Back

Variety reported the surprising news that director John Woo has decided to take on the task of developing a CG version of *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.* In a statement announcing the project, Woo wrote, "I've always loved the *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.* It's one of the greatest action-adventure properties ever." According to Peter Laird, the co-creator of the original comic book, Woo's vision is to return the Turtles to their darker, edgier roots. Christmas 2002 is the tentative release date.

www.variety.com

The Matrix Revolution

The *Northern California Movies* Web site reported that the upcoming third *Matrix* film has been subtitled *Revolutions.* Production on it and the second *Matrix* film, *Reloaded,* has finished in San Francisco and, after a brief visit to Washington, will head to Australia to complete filming, the site reported. *People* magazine, meanwhile, reported that filmmakers flew skincare guru Vera Kantor of Beverly Hills' Verabella Skin Therapy Salon to the Northern California location to treat star Carrie-Anne Moss' skin. Kantor converted a wardrobe fitting room and gave Moss her "signature" $150 caviar facial, according to the magazine. Whatever next? Champagne enemas?

www.norcalmovies.com
www.people.com

Indy Gets Green Light

New details are emerging about the development of a fourth *Indiana Jones* film, the *New York Post's* Page Six column reported. Paramount Pictures confirmed to the paper that it's "given the green light to look at scripts." But the column added that at least three scripts have been written, with rumors that the story concerns Indy's search for the lost city of Atlantis or his quest to find a long-lost brother. Both Lucas and Spielberg reportedly want writing control. "Paramount had meetings last week about the movie," an anonymous source told the *Post.* "They want the original credits: George Lucas producing, Steven Spielberg directing and Harrison Ford to star."

Elsewhere we've heard numerous stories that may slow things down—most notably, George Lucas wanting to get the Star Wars trilogy out of the way before moving onto another project, which could feasibly delay the Indiana Jones project for another five years. We've also heard that Ford is concerned that he's getting too old for the role, and would want the script to reflect this. We'll keep you posted on what happens.

www.variety.com

Super Mulder

The ludicrous rumors about the new Superman flick continue to spiral out of control. Since the departure of Nicolas Cage from the project last year—and the numerous writers, directors and producers associated with it—things are no closer to being confirmed. The latest rumor doing the rounds is that David Duchovny is a possibility for the role. Seems unlikely to us.

In the meantime, get your Superman fix when *Smallville* premieres on the WB this fall.

www.thewb.com

photo by Gerald Forster/Corbis Outline

TECMO | 100% GAMES

REC 1:34.9
TIME 1:03.5
DIST 2.9 F
BO JANGLES

10
WIN
1
BARE PRINCE
TIME 1:58.0

PLAYER 1
RICH CHATTER
DIST 5.0 F
TIME 35.9
PLAYER 2
DIST 5.0 F
BARE PRINCE

YOU DON'T HAVE TO PRETEND ANY MORE.

Gallop Racer 2001 is so realistic that you don't have to get your fingernails dirty to feel like you're in the race. Feel the burn in your legs, the pounding of your heart and the wind in your face as you compete against other horses and players. Battle against the forces of nature as you race through snow, rain and mud during the day and at night. Play as a tournament jockey, master breeder, or betting spectator in the stands. With an all-new gambling feature, Gallop Racer 2001 puts you into the game!

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PlayStation 2

TOP 10 CHARTS

PS2 Top 10

Life keeps getting better and better for PS2 owners. This month, the engrossing Dark Cloud battled with the brilliant Red Faction for dominance. Next month's title bout? Twisted Metal: Black vs. Gran Turismo 3! Which of these two stellar titles will take the top spot?

	Last Month	Title / Publisher	Rating
1	—	Dark Cloud *Sony CEA*	●●●●◖

The RPG drought on the PS2 officially ended with Dark Cloud's release (there had been only a handful of poor-to-mediocre RPGs before this one). Still, with its deep mix of simulation, real-time action, strategy and story-driven elements, Dark Cloud really defies categorization—it's more than just a mere RPG. But whatever you call it, this one deserves a spot in any gamer's collection.

Stamina
Boss
speed

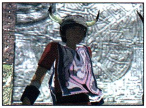
	Last Month	Title / Publisher	Rating
2	—	Red Faction *THQ*	●●●●●
3	4	Crazy Taxi *Acclaim*	●●●●
4	2	ATV Offroad Fury *Sony CEA*	●●●●
5	—	Tokyo Xtreme Racer Zero *Crave*	●●◖
6	5	Madden NFL 2001 *EA Sports*	●●●●◖

For all of the Madden 2001 buyers, hold onto your fist full of dollars. The sequel is here. Check out this month's review on page 112.

	Last Month	Title / Publisher	Rating
7	6	Tekken Tag Tournament *Namco*	●●●●◖
8	9	Midnight Club *Rockstar*	●●●●
9	3	Onimusha: Warlords *Capcom*	●●●●
10	10	NBA Live 2001 *EA Sports*	●●●

Source: NPD TRSTS Video Games Service, mid-June 2001. Call them at 516.625.2481 for questions about this list. No games for competing console systems (e.g., N64, Dreamcast) were included. Overall sales figures may vary. Game descriptions written by the OPM staff.

OPM's Most Wanted PS2 Games



1	Ico	*Sony CEA*
2	Final Fantasy X	*Square EA*
3	Metal Gear Solid 2	*Konami*
4	Tony Hawk 3	*Activision*
5	SSX: Tricky	*EA Big*
6	Silent Hill 2	*Konami*
7	Devil May Cry	*Capcom*
8	Jak & Daxter	*Sony CEA*
9	GTA 3	*Rockstar*
10	Maximo	*Capcom*

Japan's Top 10 PS2 and PS one Games

1	Atelier Lily (2)	*Gust*
2	Mosquito (2)	*SCEJ*
3	Gran Turismo 3 (2)	*SCEJ*
4	Shoubushi Densetsu (2)	*Athena*
5	Evergrace 2 (2)	*From Soft.*
6	Jikkyo Baseball 2001 (2)	*Konami*
7	Winning Eleven 2001 (2)	*Konami*
8	Tear Ring Saga (1)	*EnterBrain*
9	One Piece Grand Battle! (1)	*Bandai*
10	Pachi-Slot Oukoku 4 (1)	*Aruze*

OPM's Most Wanted PS one Games

1	Syphon Filter 3	*Sony CEA*
2	Spider-Man 2	*Activision*
3	T. Metal: Small Brawl	*Sony CEA*
4	Hoshigami	*Atlus*
5	DDR: Disney's Rave	*Konami*
6	Dragon Warrior VII	*Enix*
7	Tales of Destiny 2	*Namco*
8	E.T.	*NewKidCo*
9	Mega Man X6	*Capcom*
10	Harry Potter	*EA Games*

Top 10 Selling Games, All Systems

1	Super Mario Adv. (GBA)	*Nintendo*
2	Tony Hawk 2 (GBA)	*Activision*
3	Zelda: Seasons (GBC)	*Nintendo*
4	Zelda: Ages (GBC)	*Nintendo*
5	Castlevania (GBA)	*Konami*
6	F-Zero Max Vel. (GBA)	*Nintendo*
7	Dark Cloud (PS2)	*Sony CEA*
8	Red Faction (PS2)	*THQ*
9	Mario Party 3 (N64)	*Nintendo*
10	Rayman Adv. (GBA)	*Ubi Soft*

PS one Top 10

Take a fork and hold it over some sterno. Now jab it into your eye or arm repeatedly. Actually, don't. We don't want you to feel the pain of showing off a Top 10 chart that features two Spec Ops games. There is no pain so gruesome, as far as we can tell.

	Last Month	Title / Publisher	Rating
1	8	Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX *Activision*	●●●●

It was just a matter of time until Mat Hoffman's terrific BMX game leapt all the way to no. 1. It's got enormous environments, fantastic challenges, the best bikers in the world—and it keeps with Activision's pick-up-and-play X-games mission. Already our mouths are watering for the PS2 sequel, which has crisper graphics, more manic bikers and vaster, faster moves.

SCORE
0
1:47
SPECIAL
1571 X4

	Last Month	Title / Publisher	Rating
2	1	Spec Ops: Ranger Elite *Take 2 Interactive*	●
3	2	Gran Turismo 2 *Sony CEA*	●●●●●
4	4	ATV: Quad Power Racing *Acclaim*	●
5	—	Blade *Activision*	●●◖

Blade? Yes. Blade. Considering the game released months ago, we're still trying to figure why it's suddenly a hit. We'll wonder on.

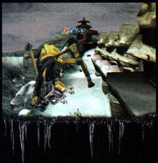
	Last Month	Title / Publisher	Rating
6	6	Spec Ops *Take 2 Interactive*	●
7	—	Blue's Clues: Blues Big Musical *THQ*	●●●
8	—	MLB 2002 *Sony CEA*	●●
9	—	Ford Racing *Empire*	●●◖
10	—	Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX *Acclaim Max*	●●●◖

Source: NPD TRSTS Video Games Service, mid-June 2001. Call them at 516.625.2481 for questions about this list. No games for competing console systems (e.g., N64, Dreamcast) were included. Overall sales figures may vary. Game descriptions written by the OPM staff.

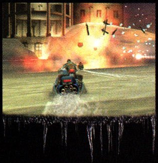
MIDWAY
www.midway.com

START
FINISH

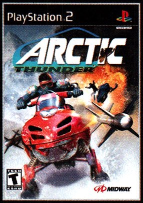
Throttle the competition with hard-core hand-to-hand combat.



Hyper-realistic racing velocity and major air give new meaning to "breakneck speed."



Make 'em feel you with combat weapons like snow bombs, missiles, and The Atomic Snowball.



Sneak Preview @ www.arcticthunder.midway.com

ARCTIC THUNDER

PlayStation 2

XBOX

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Mild Violence

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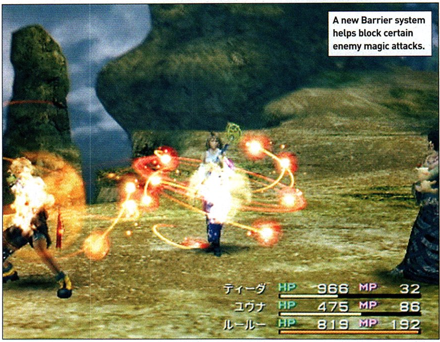
Coming Soon

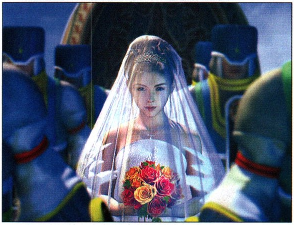
August		
Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX 2	Acclaim	X-Sports
Extreme-G 3	Acclaim	Racing
Gadget Racer	Conspiracy	Racing
Giants: Citizen Kabuto	Interplay	Adv.
Half-Life	Sierra	FPS
Le Mans 24 Hours	Infogrames	Racing
Madden NFL 2002	EA Sports	Sports
NCAA Football 2002	EA Sports	Sports
NFL Quarterback Club '02	Acclaim	Sports
Okage: Shadow King	Sony CEA	RPG
Paris-Dakar Rally	Acclaim	Racing
Portal Runner	3DO	Action
RE-Code: Veronica X	Capcom	Adv.
Test Drive Off-Road: WO	Infogrames	Racing
September		
Arctic Thunder	Midway	Racing
Baldur's Gate: DA	Interplay	RPG
Bass Strike	THQ	Fishing
Capcom vs. SNK 2	Capcom	Fighting
Commandos 2	Eidos	Strategy
ESPN X Games: Skatebrdg	Konami	X-Sports
Kessen II	Koei	Strategy
Lotus Challenge	Interplay	Racing
Monster Rancher 3	Tecmo	RPG
NHL 2002	EA Sports	Sports
NHL Hitz 20-02	Midway	Sports
Project Eden	Eidos	Adv.
RLH	Interplay	Adv.
Silent Hill 2	Konami	Adv.
Soul Reaver 2	Eidos	Adv.
Spy Hunter	Midway	Action
Thunderstrike: Op. Phoenix	Eidos	Action
Time Crisis II	Namco	Shooter
Yanya Caballista: City Skater	Koei	Action
October		
18 Wheeler	Acclaim	Racing
Batman: Vengeance	Ubi Soft	Action
Casper: Spirit Dimensions	TDK	Action
Conflict Zone	Ubi Soft	Strategy
ESPN NFL Prime Time	Konami	Sports
Evil Twin	Ubi Soft	Adv.
Grand Theft Auto III	Rockstar	Action
Hot Shots Golf 3	Sony CEA	Sports
Ico	Sony CEA	Adv.
Kinetica	Sony CEA	Racing
Maximo	Capcom	Action
Minigolf Maniacs	Sierra	Sports
MS Gundam: Zeonic Front	Bandai	Strategy
The Mummy Returns	Universal	Action
NFL 2K2	Sega	Sports
Shaun Palmer Snowboarder	Activision	X-Sports
Smuggler's Run 2	Rockstar	Action
SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALs	Sony CEA	Action
Splashdown	Infogrames	Racing
Sunny Garcia Surfing	Ubi Soft	X-Sports
Supercar Street Challenge	Activision	Racing
Tribes 2	Sierra	Action
Wave Rally	Eidos	Racing
WWF SmackDown! Just...	THQ	Wrestling
November		
Ace Combat 4	Namco	Action
Aliens: Colonial Marines	Fox Int.	Action
Crash Bandicoot: TWoC	TBA	Action
Dark Summit	THQ	X-Sports
Deus Ex	Eidos	FPS/RPG
Devil May Cry	Capcom	Adv.
Downforce	Titus	Racing
Drakan II	Sony CEA	Adv.
E.O.E.: Eve of Extinction	Eidos	Action
ESPN Nat'l Hockey Night	Konami	Sports
ESPN NBA 2Night 2002	Konami	Sports
ESPN Winter Sports 2002	Konami	Sports
FIFA 2002	EA Sports	Sports
Frequency	Sony CEA	Puzzle
Frogger: The Great Quest	Konami	Action
H2Overdrive	Crave	Racing
Herdy Gerdy	Eidos	Action
James Bond 007 in...AUF	EA Games	FPS
Jeremy McGrath's SuperX	Acclaim	Racing
Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius	THQ	Action
Jurassic Park: Survival	Universal	Action
Legends of Wrestling	Acclaim	Wrestling
Metal Gear Solid 2: SoL	Konami	Adv.
Monsters Inc.	Sony CEA	Action
NBA 2K2	Sega	Sports
NBA Live 2002	EA Sports	Sports
NBA ShootOut 2002	Sony CEA	Sports
NCAA Final Four 2002	Sony CEA	Sports
NCAA GameBreaker 2002	Sony CEA	Sports
NFL Blitz 20-02	Midway	Sports
NHL FaceOff 2002	Sony CEA	Sports
Pirates of Skull Cove	EA Games	Action
Police 911	Konami	Shooter
Pryzm: The Dark Unicorn	TDK	RPG
Rubu Tribe	Interplay	Action
Silent Scope 2	Konami	Shooter
The Simpsons: Road Rage	EA Games	Action
SSX Tricky	EA Sports	X-Sports
Star Trek: Shattered Universe	Interplay	Action

Final Fantasy X

Anticipation to this degree is probably unhealthy

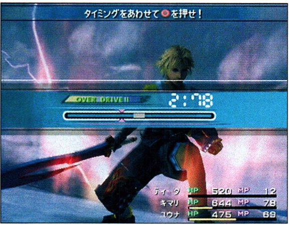
By the time you read this, **Square's** first PS2 RPG, Final Fantasy X, has been released in Japan—making it all the more difficult to stomach the fact that we won't be seeing the game in the States until **February of next year**. What a long next few months these will be. Because of this, we felt inclined to bring you some new screens. To show you we care. Actually, just so that you can suffer along with us.


A new Barrier system helps block certain enemy magic attacks.



The Wedding

One of the rather important scenes early on in FFX is the grand wedding between Yuna and Seymour Guado. A powerful man, Seymour is Master of Yevon (the land's theology against technology and machinery) and head of the demi-human Guado tribe. Unfortunately, this is an arranged marriage, with Yuna rather unwilling to partake. Whether or not this is known at the time, Yuna is eventually the love interest of the main character, Tidus.

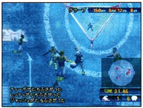


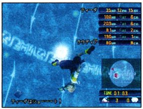
Overdrives

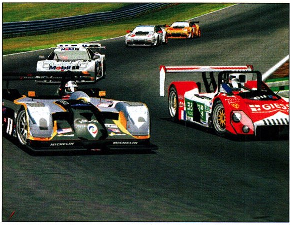
All characters can execute unique special attacks called Overdrive moves (left). You can charge up the meter for these in different ways depending on the individual. Some charge up with damage, but, for example, if during an attack Lulu becomes angry, her Overdrive meter gradually fills up on its own. FFX also has an Overkill system: If you inflict damage far greater than the amount of hit points an enemy has remaining, you'll earn extra ability points.

Blitzball

A rather large minigame, Blitzball (below) is the most popular sport for the people of FFX. Taking place entirely underwater, the game essentially combines rugby and water polo, except that it requires athletes to hold their breaths for over 40 minutes at a time. The game itself is rather fast-paced, but your turn-based actions allow for plenty of strategy. You can play Blitzball at any save point.

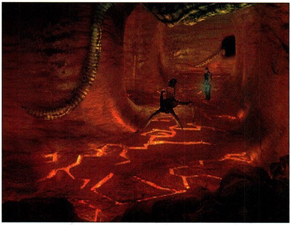






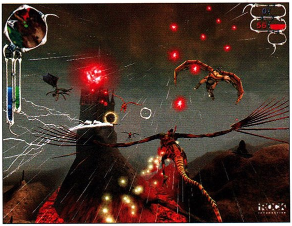
World Sports Cars

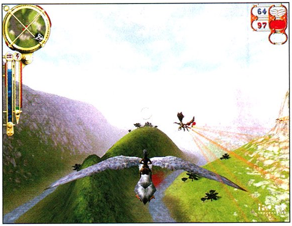
Empire Interactive and **Razorworks'** upcoming racer is set to give people what they've wanted from this kind of thing for ages: damage. And lots of it. Take control of one of 12 high-performance cars, and watch the body panels peel off as you grind up against the wall or smash into other cars. Early indications suggest that this could be quite a surprise when it's eventually released **early next year**. It may not be Gran Turismo 3, but it looks to offer something different.



Alone in the Dark: The New Nightmare

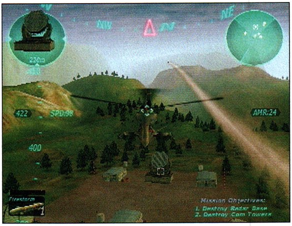
While traipsing around the generously imagined and complex, creepy environments of the latest Alone in the Dark, we couldn't help but imagine what the game would look like with the PS2 giving the ol' college try. It appears we won't have to use our imaginations. **Infogrames** has opted to scare the willies out of us this **Christmas**. So far, the game won't have any extras. But that could change.





Ozzy's Black Skies

No more tears, Ozzy fans. That version of Ozzy's Black Skies from **iRock Interactive** that you played this year at Ozzfest isn't exclusive to the PC—we're getting it on PS2 this **holiday season**, as well. Guide one of 24 winged creatures (including bats—no word yet on whether or not they come headless, though) through 15 unique environments and over 30 levels of shoot-'em-up action. The Ozzman's music is heard throughout, including an original single called "Black Skies."



Thunderstrike: Operation Phoenix

Navigating through loads of enemy fire in **Eidos'** new Thunderstrike installment feels like a breeze as you make use of both analog sticks to control your chopper. Couple that with the sense of realism one feels when flying close to the ground or in one of the game's cockpit views, and you'll see why we think Operation Phoenix could be one of the most exhilarating experiences on the PS2. See for yourself what we mean when the game is released **next month**.

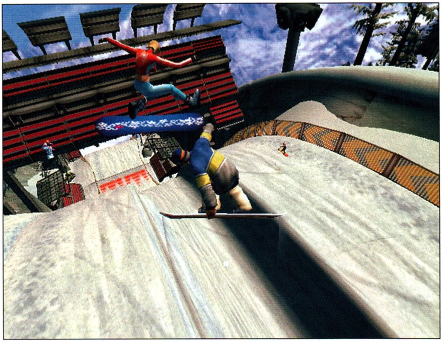
SSX Tricky

The sequel we've all been waiting for

Ask a handful of PS2 owners—heck, ask a busload of PS2 owners—for the title of one must-have game and we'll bet many will respond with three letters: SSX. **EA Big**'s first entry onto the PS2 effectively dumfounded gamers with a sassy mix of searing speed, wily tricks, eclectic tunes and environments so vast one might have wondered when the race would finally end. Good news. It returns in **November**.

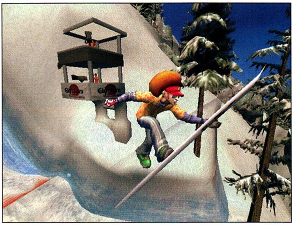
Yes, like popular films of our day, we are being dealt a sequel. Here's the score: It's a year later, and there are six new faces (though Hiro and Jurgen didn't survive the cut). All characters come enhanced with celebrity voices ranging from the wacky David Arquette to the saucy Lucy Liu. A more involved story surfaces, as rivalries develop between boarders, and British Columbia and the Alaskan wilderness house the game's two new tracks. And while the rest of the environments merely rehash those of the original, it'll be like returning to your hometown 10 years later: The tracks are familiar yet different. Avalanches have hit, some old paths have been snowed in, and others have opened up.

But, as the title suggests, this game has more to do with tricks than the first. The new Uber tricks are so daringly cool that first seeing them will lead to a fierce bout of excited fist pumping.



New Blood

Along with the "accidents" that rid Tricky of both Jurgen and Hiro, this SSX features others to fill the void. New to SSX is Eddie Wachowski (right), who may specialize in riding boardercross, but his inspiration comes from such hobbies as skateboarding, freestyle motocross and freestyle BMX. While we're eager to see Eddie board and twirl in Tricky, we have to wonder when to expect him in other EA Big games—maybe even on a skateboard.



Pre-Order Watch

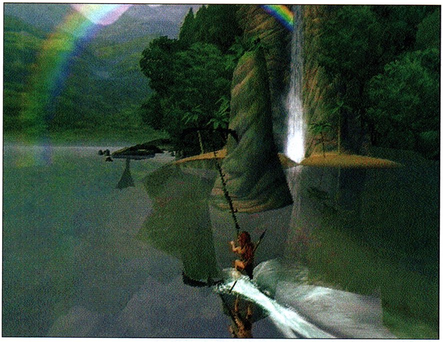
STORE	PRE-ORDER	PRICE	SHIP DATE
Amazon.com	N	N/A	N/A
BestBuy.com	N	N/A	N/A
Buy.com	Y	$48.99	11/7/01
EBgames.com	Y	$49.99	11/1/01
GameStop.com	Y	$49.99	11/13/01

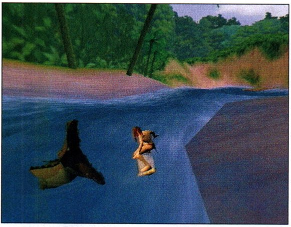
all data as of 7/9/01

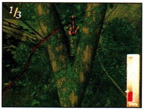
Tarzan Untamed

The Ape Man goes extreme

Usually, sequels to Disney movies go straight to video. With Tarzan Untamed, however, **Ubi Soft** is releasing one straight to PS2. Much in the spirit of the great animated film of 1999, Untamed features the kind of action that made for such a cool flick. While we're pretty sure Tony Hawk has nothing to do with the project (his skating style was copied for the movie, y'know), you'd never guess it based on the clean tree-surfing animations. But that's not the only cool athletic feat accomplished by the Ape Man. We've had some hands-on experience with everything from surfing down a croc-infested river, to bungee jumping (see sidebar), to having a bird with a rope attached to its talons glide us across dangerous waters. Of course, you've also got some standard 3D platforming to do, swinging between vines included. And what would a Tarzan game be without the ability to bellow his trademark call? Whatever action you take, most involve nothing more than the push of a single button—no crazy combos here. Avoid obstacles with the D-pad here, jump a void there...you get the idea. Simple as it may be, though, we often found the stages quite difficult, a little surprising for a game you'd expect a younger audience to count the days until **October** for. But it's still quite amusing in that fast-paced, arcadey way.

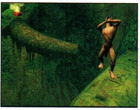


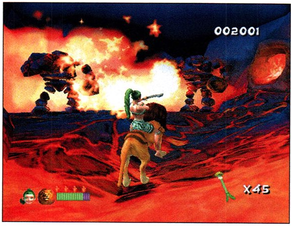


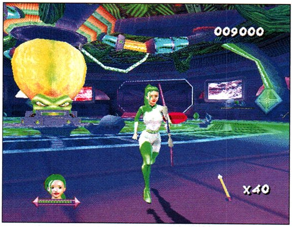


Free Fallin'

Just one of the many extreme sports gone primal that you'll find in Tarzan Untamed is bungee jumping. Your object in this bonus stage is to move our jungle hero through the gaps appearing between tree limbs on his rapid descent toward a deep lake. Make your way through without touching any limbs, and you'll gain the momentum necessary to snag the power-up at the bottom of the body of water. (We just wish we knew the power-up's use.)

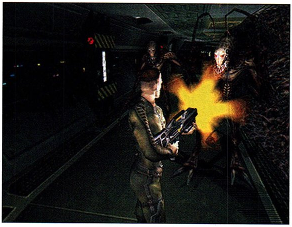






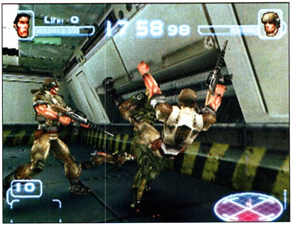
Portal Runner

According to representatives at **3DO,** this isn't an Army Men game. Nope, not at all. The fact that it takes place in the Army Men universe and prominently features Army Men characters and familiar Army Men gameplay mechanics is irrelevant. You are Vikki the Portal Runner, a toy/girl/photojournalist accompanied on her adventures by a Lion called Leo (really, what else would he be called?). The game is out in **August**, and you can play a demo on our PS2 disc next month.



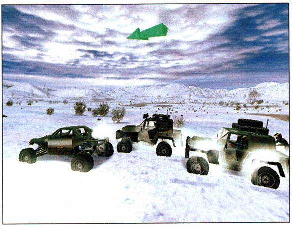
RLH

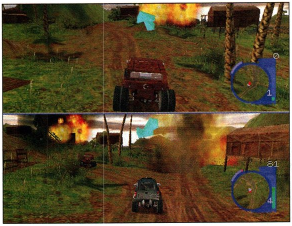
Quite possibly undergoing one of the worst title changes in history, the game formerly called Run Like Hell is now known as its initials, RLH. RLH?! We understand that putting the word "Hell" in a title might make some of the more misguided people out there think of **Interplay** as the root of all that's evil, but c'mon! At least change the title to something with *meaning*. Anyway, despite the lame name, the game still looks fun and action-packed. We'll see it in **September**.



Hidden Invasion

Though the plot, according to **Conspiracy**'s press release, "is being kept firmly under wraps," we can tell you a few things about Hidden Invasion. The game puts players in the role of a Special Forces commander, with an engine that combines heavy weaponry and hand-to-hand combat. Considering the game is being developed by **Toka**, who created the hack-n'-slash Dreamcast game Soul Fighter, this should come as no surprise. Watch for Hidden Invasion in **October**.





Smuggler's Run 2

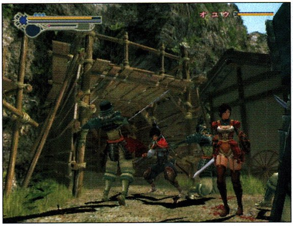
This highly anticipated follow-up to **Rockstar**'s excellent game of automobile mayhem is set for an **October** release. The sequel promises a host of additions, including weather effects (rain, snow, fog and sandstorms) that influence handling, new vehicles (ATVs and tank-tread vehicles), night missions and two new environments: Afghanistan and Vietnam. We're also promised a deeper plot, enhanced enemy AI and improved graphics. If that's even possible.

Onimusha: Warlords 2

Sayonara, Samanosuke

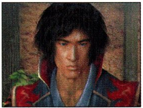
We hope you didn't get too attached to the hero of the original Onimusha: Warlords, Samanosuke, when you played through it earlier this year—'cause he's nowhere to be found in **Capcom**'s sequel, likely finding its way to America **early next year**. Instead, we've got a whole new hero modeled after a whole new Japanese motion-picture star (see sidebar). Of course, you probably already know this if you saw the trailer for Onimusha 2 after you beat Sammy's quest. Remember the guy with the eyepatch? His name's Jubei Yagyu, and he's the samurai you lead against the forces of evil this time out. Only he doesn't have an eyepatch anymore. "We decided not to have it because the face looks so good," producer Keiji Inafune recently told the Japanese mag *Famitsu*, obviously happy with his project's look so far.

Unfortunately, little else is known about Onimusha 2 at this point. Some might find it interesting that Inafune has once again opted for prerendered backgrounds, not real-time ones. We're also aware that much of the game takes place during the day (the first was all at night—sort of a cop-out since it's easier to create environments using darker backgrounds), and you'll even run into the occasional friendly human. And could that stern fellow below be another resurrection of Nobunaga? We shall see.



The New Guy

Remember how Samanosuke was modeled directly after superstud Japanese actor Takeshi Kaneshiro? Well, now that we have a new protagonist, Capcom has called upon further silver-screen talent from the Land of the Rising Sun, this time in the form of Yusaku Matsuda. Believe it or not, you might have actually seen him in an American film. He played Kogi Sato in the 1989 Michael Douglas flick *Black Rain*. (Yeah, we don't remember him either.)

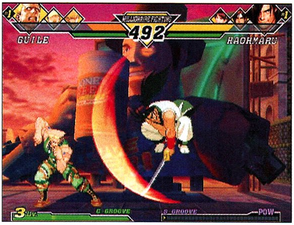


Capcom vs. SNK 2

The PS2 flexes its 2D muscles

Before the giant fighting game rivalry that is Tekken vs. Virtua Fighter took shape, one other big head-to-head competition existed. Ever since the early '90s, **Capcom**'s many incarnations of Street Fighter have challenged SNK and its King of Fighters line for the right to 2D fighting-game supremacy. And this rivalry continued well through the decade, until SNK found itself in financial difficulty and, of all things, decided to come to an agreement with Capcom. The two companies teamed up to deliver the best of both fighting game series—Capcom fighting game characters playing against SNK characters in one game. The result? Capcom vs. SNK.

The sequel to the original (and the first of the series to hit PS2), Capcom vs. SNK 2: Mark of the Millennium 2001 not only greatly expands the fighting roster of the original, but also offers a major graphical overhaul. Whereas backgrounds in the original were stagnant 2D backdrops, those in the sequel flow with 3D activity akin to what you'd find in Marvel vs. Capcom 2. Capcom also listened to the comments of fans of the original and opted to include a standard six-button control layout. Fans might also delight in knowing the game's PS2 debut (**September**) will actually beat that of its arcade arrival.

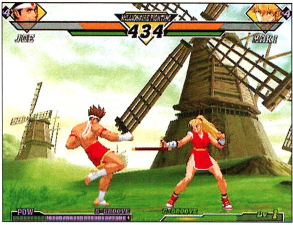


534
EAGLE
YUN

Capcom Fighter List

The list of Capcom fighters (tentative) are as follows:

Dan
Maki
Sagat
Akuma
Sakura
Ryu
Guile
Eagle
Balrog
Kyosuke
Ken
Rolento
Cammy
Zangief
Chun-Li
Yun
Dhalsim
Vega
Blanka
M. Bison
E. Honda
Morrigan



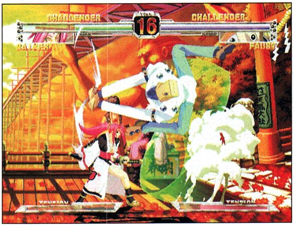
SNK Fighter List

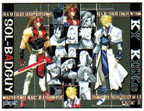
Athena Asamiya
Hibiki
Rock Howard
Rugal Bernstein
Ryo Sakazaki
Ryuhaku Todo
Joe Higashi
Terry Bogard
Chang Koehan
Iori Yagami
Yuri Sakazaki
Mai Shiranui
Kyo Kusanagi
Geese Howard
Kim Kap Hwan
Benimaru Nikaido
Nakoruru
Ryuji Yamazaki
Haohmaru
King
Raiden
Vice

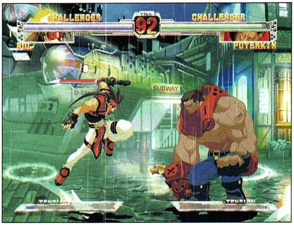
Guilty Gear X

Hardcore Japanese slugfest

If you take your 2D fighting games very seriously, then **Sammy Entertainment**'s Guilty Gear X may well prove worth checking out this **fall.** It doesn't offer the glitz and glamour of Tekken, nor the street cred of Street Fighter. What it does offer, though, is a very, um, "Japanese" experience for those craving something a bit different. Originally an arcade game and subsequently a very successful Dreamcast title in Japan, fighting fans' only chance to play it here in the States is on the PS2. What can you expect? Well, anime-style fighters for a start, some clearly (and oddly) playing homage to '80s rock icons. Chipp Zanuff? Axl Low? Venom? Testament? It's like being at Monsters of Rock in 1985. Also watch for some whacky special moves. Ever wanted to summon a dolphin out of thin air to whack someone with? Now you can.







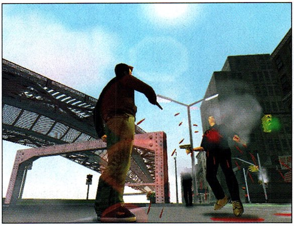
Grand Theft Auto III

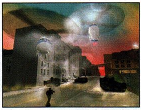
You know...just your typical carjacking game

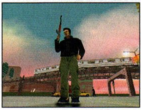
When Grand Theft Auto III hits store shelves in **October**, consider cooking up a bucket of popcorn while you play. It seems, with GTA3, **Rockstar** is trying to blur the lines between cinema and gaming. And so far it looks like a raging success, not to mention that it has as much personality as *The Godfather*.

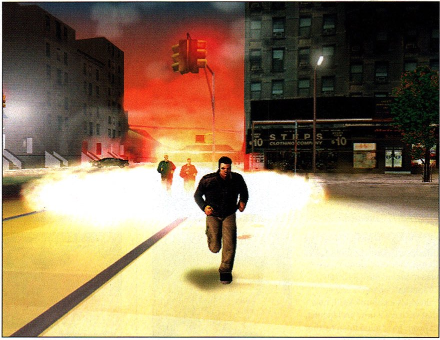
To get a sense of the type of flick you'll be playing/watching, think *Goodfellas*, think *Sopranos*, think *Reservoir Dogs*. Then consider that the voices in the game are actors from these films. Very cool. These R-rated inspirations only work so well because GTA3 is an M-Rated game. Of course, we expect a vocal backlash from some vote-hungry politician. Even with the M-Rating. But they'll get over it.

So here's the story: You, as the main character, team up with your girlfriend and another non-law-abiding citizen in an attempted bank heist—only things don't go as planned. Caught in the act, you take the fall, while your girlfriend escapes, all nuzzled up to your other partner in crime. The trip to prison introduces you to 8-Ball, with whom you eventually escape, carjacking an unsuspecting driver—the first of many. Behind the wheel of one of the game's 50 vehicles, you head into Liberty City and its burrows. There, 8-Ball leads you to Luigi, the mafia leader. Your 80-mission quest for revenge begins.



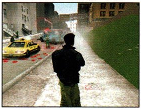






Help Yourself

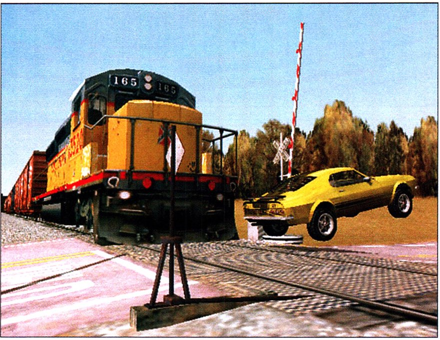
When you're cruising around the free-roaming environments of Grand Theft Auto III, over 50 different types of vehicles exist for your jacking pleasure. Maybe you'll pull someone from his/her urban assault SUV. Or perhaps you'd rather put a gun in the face of a man driving a taxi cab. You can even take over fire engines, ambulances, buses, cop cars...pretty much anything you'd see on a city street.

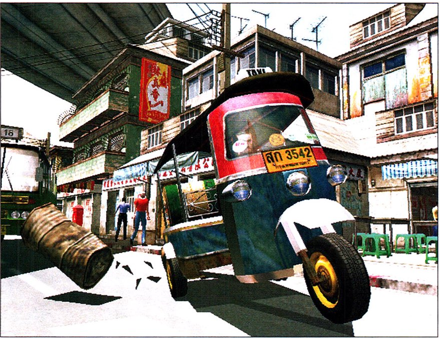


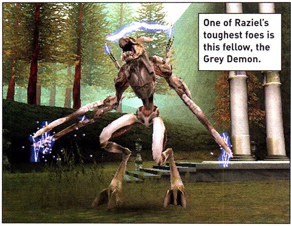
Stuntman

Prepare to risk life and limb

Though Stuntman is currently a ways off (**Infogrames** expects to release it in the **second quarter of 2002**), we couldn't resist giving you another look at the new game from **Reflections**, the creators of Driver. As we reported back in July, Stuntman takes its Driver lineage and runs with it, putting players in the role of a Hollywood fall guy. You'll have to follow specific orders from directors on 20 different film shoots in six different locations, including Louisiana, London, Switzerland, Monaco and Bangkok. The game is still all about driving, but the addition of required tricks like 360s and jumps should make for more focused, fast-paced action. Expect to drive knock-offs of famous sport cars (the lack of real-world cars should allow for plenty of body damage!) and some more interesting vehicles. As Driver fans, we're already salivating.



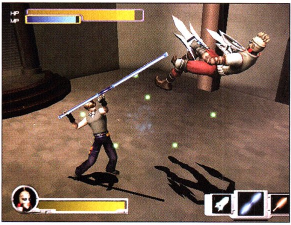




One of Raziel's toughest foes is this fellow, the Grey Demon.

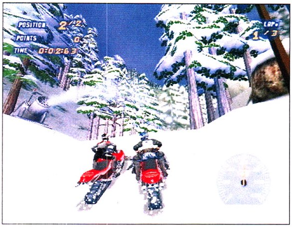
Soul Reaver 2

Eidos Interactive and **Crystal Dynamics'** eagerly awaited sequel should be upon us very soon. Currently scheduled to ship in **September**, the beleaguered project (it's almost a year late!) is certainly as impressive as we'd hoped. What's that? A little doubtful there, Sparky? Then remember this: There will be a fantastic playable demo of this gothic 3D action/adventure on our PS2 demo disc next month. You'll see exactly what we mean.



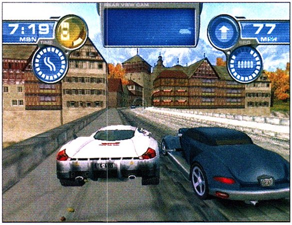
E.O.E.: Eve of Extinction

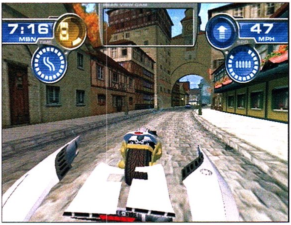
E.O.E. is a game of free-roaming hand-to-hand and projectile combat set in a dark future run by evil corporations. But before you start worrying that this might be a sequel to Oni, let us reassure you: E.O.E. is under development by **Yuke's**, the talented studio responsible for the WWF SmackDown! titles. Due in the **fall** from **Eidos**, the title puts players in control of a variety of intelligent, dynamic weapons called Legacies that evolve over the course of the game.



Sled Storm 2

We loved the first Sled Storm, so we're eager to get our hands on Sled Storm 2 from **EA Sports Big**. We can't wait to try out the S.T.O.R.M. meter, which produces a sort of "on fire" mode that juices up your rider. Or the new trick system, which includes over 30 tricks (and trick points are now converted directly to cash, which can be used to upgrade your sled). Six characters race across 12 tracks with up to four players via split-screen when the game releases this **fall**.





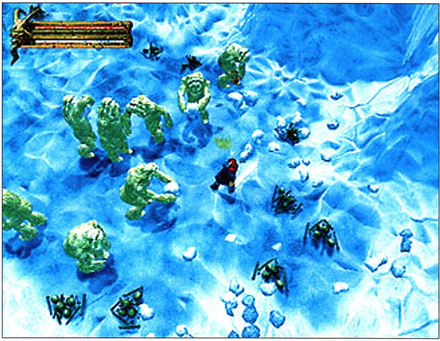
Spy Hunter

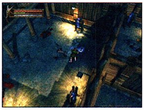
It's official. After sampling a fair bit of the first two of 14 missions in Spy Hunter, we're incredibly psyched for its **September** release from **Midway**. There's nothing cooler than chasing a NOSTRA vehicle down a paved street, only to have your terrain suddenly change to water, your car seamlessly transforming to compensate by morphing into a hydrocraft. It all moves very quickly, and you've got tons of stuff to shoot at all the while. Watch for a demo next month.

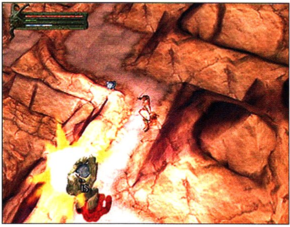
Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance

Be a hero...naked if you want

Recently, **Interplay** showed us its advancement on the eagerly awaited PS2 debut of the heralded PC franchise Baldur's Gate. If you've kept up with our coverage, you no doubt know that it takes a more console-friendly approach to the series, adopting a more action-oriented, Diablo-esque style of gameplay. And while many might feel a little cheated that we lowly "console gamers" seemingly aren't suited for the depth of the PC experience, that doesn't necessarily mean that we still don't have a decent share of hardcore RPG elements to manage. Of course, you've got your selection of warrior types—the well-balanced ranger, the strong-fighting dwarf, the magic-loving (and very female) elf. And you've got a great variety of weapons and magic (40 spells!) to master. But perhaps most interesting of all, your character's on-screen representation accurately presents the clothing you equip—which, as we were shown, can even be your birthday suit. It remains to be seen whether Sony lets this little detail pass.







Pre-Order Watch

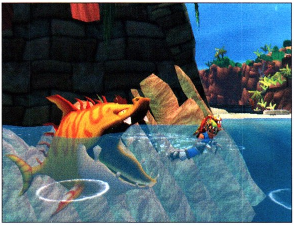
STORE	PRE-ORDER	PRICE	SHIP DATE
Amazon.com	N	N/A	N/A
BestBuy.com	N	N/A	N/A
Buy.com	Y	$49.99	9/6/01
EBgames.com	Y	$49.99	9/6/01
GameStop.com	Y	$49.99	9/6/01

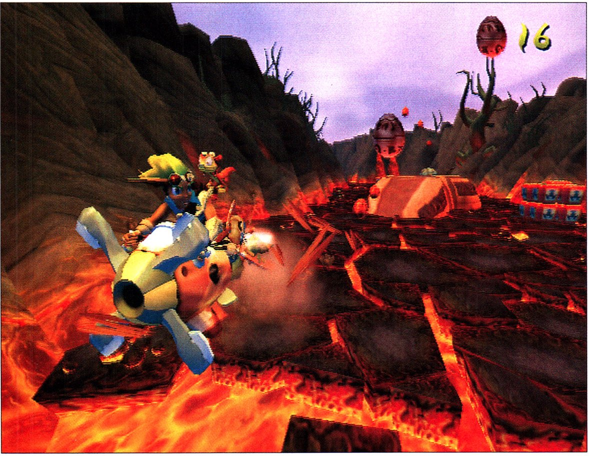
all data as of 7/9/01

Jak and Daxter: The Precursor Legacy

The new faces of PS2?

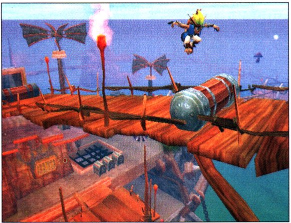
Naughty Dog's upcoming 3D adventure romp has been causing quite a stir over the past couple of months, and with good reason. When we first showed you screens back in the July issue, it was already looking pretty special. Now we've had a bit more time with the game, and it's safe to say that "the Dogs" (as they refer to themselves) have almost certainly repeated what they achieved with Crash Bandicoot years ago: They've set new standards by which other games will be judged. As we've reported before, the game appears to be much more complex than any of the Crash titles, but really it isn't. It's a free-roaming 3D cartoonish adventure with some wonderful presentation, gorgeous environments, loveable characters and, most importantly, accessible gameplay. As you wander through the enormous and lushly detailed world, the game picks you up and carries you along with it, opening up new possibilities at every turn. Expect Jak and Daxter around **Christmas**.

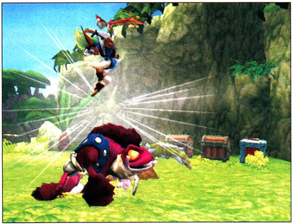


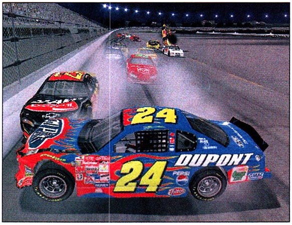


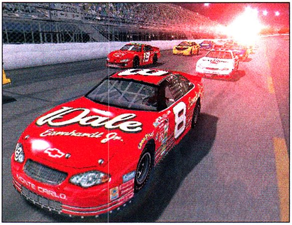
Animaniacs

Every game studio worth its salt these days is telling us that "all the cutscenes will be in the game engine," but few of them are really delivering a storytelling experience that matches the quality of the CG vignettes that we've grown so used to. Jak and Daxter is certainly looking a bit different, though. Interaction with other characters in the game reveals some wonderfully exaggerated, cartoon-style animation with humorous and well-executed voice talent to boot. Whereas many games show you some half-hearted attempts at lip-synching the speech, here we see characters expressing themselves fully with their mouths, eyes, eyebrows, body language and over-the-top gesturing.



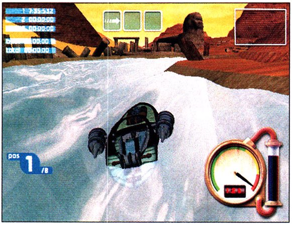






NASCAR Thunder 2002

EA Sports is hoping to make up for the underwhelming performance of NASCAR 2001 with an array of tweaks and additions. Most promising is the introduction of a completely new graphics engine designed to accommodate more cars on the track—one of the big gripes of last year's model. Also included: all 23 NASCAR tracks, a new career mode spanning multiple seasons, and a new Easy Play mode, which allows novices to get in the game more quickly. Look for it this **fall**.



H2Overdrive

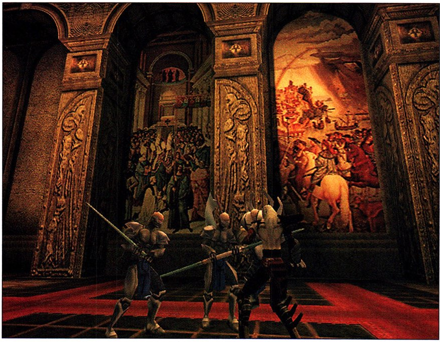
Due **late this year**, **Crave**'s upcoming hydro-racing game pits you in a worldwide circuit where you'll zoom through 10 tracks, ranging from the splendors of Iceland to the familiarity of an amusement park. Each track comes replete with secret paths and weaponry to knock your opponents to the wayside. Not enough destruction for you in the races? Then choose one of the 10 3D real-time characters and one of 10 vehicles to throw into the game's Battle mode.

Blood Omen 2

The Legacy of Kain starts to get complicated

OK, so here's the deal with **Crystal Dynamics'** slowly developing epic. The first game was Blood Omen: The Legacy of Kain (where you played as Kain). Then came Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver (where Kain was the bad guy). Soon, the "Legacy of Kain" moniker gets dropped altogether, as the simply titled Soul Reaver 2 (Kain = bad guy again) and Blood Omen 2 (where you play as Kain again) make their way to PS2. Confused yet? We'll explain. Using the first game as the basis for the timeline, Soul Reaver took place millennia later. Soul Reaver 2 takes place immediately after this and then involves time travel that takes you back prior to the first game (if we understand it correctly), and Blood Omen 2 takes place at some point between the first game and Soul Reaver, where Kain is slowly evolving into the superhuman evil vampire that we've come to know since. Easy. You should take notes. There'll be a test later.

We recently had the chance to spend some time with the game, and it's clear that although sharing a similar general style with Soul Reaver, Blood Omen 2 is much more of an action title with a lot more fisticuffs than Raziel ever really manages to get himself involved with. Kain is very much a hunted individual here, and as the game progresses his abilities develop until he becomes quite the nasty S.O.B. We watched as the antihero ripped out throats, impaled, stabbed, tore, strangled and occasionally mutilated an opponent by punching him in the back, grabbing his still-beating heart, and pushing it out through his chest before dropping it to the ground with a squelchy plop. This one is going to have "concerned" parents reaching for the sick bag before acting as though outraged at how preposterous it all is. Don't try this at home, kids. Ripping out people's hearts is bad, OK? Same goes for jabbing large pointy spikes up people's bottoms, out through their mouths, and then leaving them to writhe about in agony. The game will no doubt get an M rating (and rightly so), but as long as everyone adheres to the rules, it shouldn't be a problem now, should it? **Eidos** originally had the game slated for release soon after Soul Reaver 2 in September, but we now hear it could be delayed until **March 2002**.



Stealth and Gooey Bits

The previous Blood Omen was more of a traditional role-playing game with lots of blood. Soul Reaver was a more gothic, trippy, monster-filled fantasy adventure. Blood Omen 2, if you can imagine, is like an earthy, gritty, horror story that takes lots of the cool ideas from the original game, makes them more action-oriented, and throws in a healthy dose of Metal Gear-like stealth action.

Pre-Order Watch

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EBgames.com	Y	$49.99	11/1/01
GameStop.com	Y	$49.99	11/1/01

all data as of 7/9/01

Yanya Caballista: City Skater

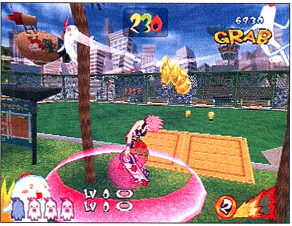
What's in a name?

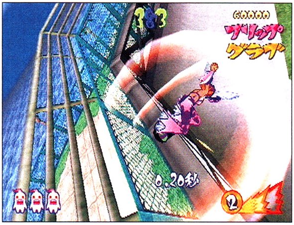
While sitting around the office, snacking on scones and sipping fancy tea, the *OPM* staff tried to imagine a title worse than the original one planned for this game: Yanya Caballista featuring Gawoo. The best we came up with was Filibuster Shanty featuring Groo the Wanderer. But even that conjures some type of image. The first title's biggest problem wasn't the fact that it was ridiculous and none of the words except "featuring" made any sense to common folk, but that it gave no indication that it's going to be a new skateboarding game. And skateboarding games are popular. Luckily, **Koei**'s made a wise change.

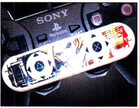
With a snappy new title, the company's newest effort features some wondrously painted graphics that are as imaginatively realized as *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?*. The cel-shaded art draws you instantly into the game's spirit from the moment you slam your wheels down onto the cartoony asphalt. The street signs are oddly shaped and angled; the characters are sweetly animated with plenty of panache; and the buildings and cars exude a Warner Bros. style. Once you're inside the game, it's easy to get lost in the momentum of trying to unlock newer, inspiring levels.

Moving onto the story, you might be scared away. But don't be. Apparently, Caballistas are skateboarders who reside in New San Francisco. But it seems that an alien race (the Gawoo) has invaded and turned the happy skateboarding city into a virtual ghost town. Strangely, there's only one way to rid the town of these ghostly aliens: skateboarding. Now you can quit wondering about the old spacey title.

Another interesting note is that Yanya features more than just Gawoo, but also a fingerboard for control. It takes quite a bit of getting used to and will cause some gamers to lose interest, but a little patience will have you scooting around town without a care. The Gawoo invade in late **September**.

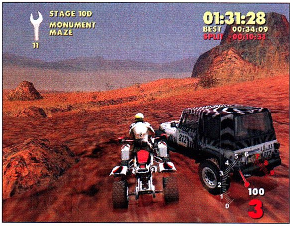






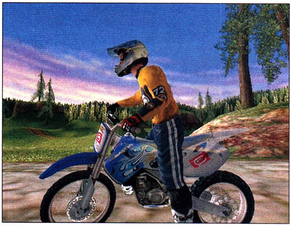
Forget About Tech Deck

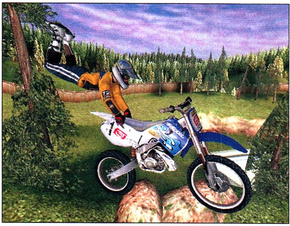
Toying around with fingerboards is lame. But Yanya makes it a necessity. Once you suction the device onto your PS2 controller and turn your controller sideways, you can get on with the game. While the system is awkward and a bit frustrating, you'll get used to it. We just wonder if the board will be packed in with the game. After all, Surfing H30 never shipped with its "X-Board."



Paris-Dakar Rally

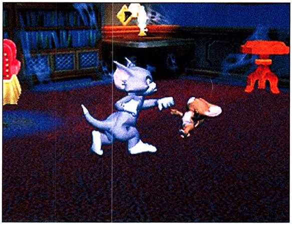
Described on its official Web site as "a large dose of sporting exploit and human adventure," the Paris-Dakar Rally is a gruelling, 17-day race from France to Dakar, Sénégal, in Africa—over 6,500 miles. In **August**, **Acclaim** brings the experience home, summarizing the exhausting race in 12 different stages, each over 10 miles long. You'll have to deal with tons of environmental hazards in the wild, and even keep an eye on your driver's personal nourishment. Sounds rough.





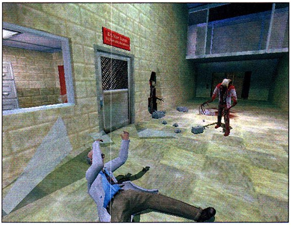
EA Sports Supercross 2002

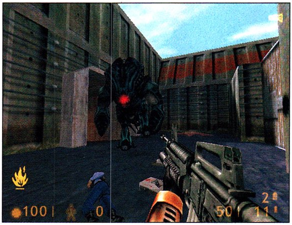
It might not have a prestigious racer like Ricky Carmichael or Jeremy McGrath in its title, but EA Sports Supercross 2002 (from, of all publishers, **EA Sports**) certainly shows plenty of potential. Remember the house stunt level in last year's PS one version? The one with the dried-out pool? Well, it and other recognizable courses have been given the PS2 treatment, along with a few new tracks (we're not sure how many yet) perfect for some good ol' dirt-bikin'.



Tom & Jerry: War of the Whiskers

Tom and Jerry's PS one game released last year didn't make much noise on the sales charts, but it delivered the goods that anyone might expect from a game based on the classic animated shorts: nonstop cartoon violence. **Next year**'s PS2 debut of the destructive duo from **NewKidCo** looks to be much of the same, only with more weapons, more environments and more characters, including Spike, Tyke, Nibbles, Duckling, Butch and other top-secret brawlers.





Half-Life

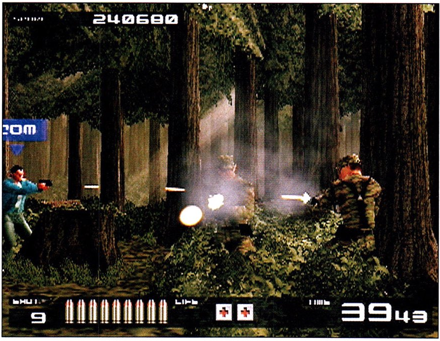
It's not too far off. Actually, it's scheduled for release **this month**, as of press time. Finally, console gamers will get a shot at **Sierra**'s Half-Life, what many consider the greatest PC first-person shooter ever—and with a little bonus to boot. In addition to the entire, revamped game (the characters feature four times as much detail, for example), an exclusive PS2 episode called Decay was designed specifically for two-player cooperative play. Count on a review soon.

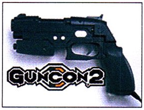
Time Crisis II

An arcade hit comes home...with some other ones, too

A nearly complete version of Time Crisis II recently found its way into the *OPM* offices, and we've had a hard time putting it down. A seemingly perfect port of the 1998 arcade offering, the game's action races along at breakneck speeds, but not without your ability to seek the occasional much-needed respite as you seek cover and reload. If you've played the arcade version, you might remember that the cabinet featured two screens, one for each of the players who take slightly different routes as they shoot their way through a level. **Namco** has made this same experience possible on your PS2 in one of two ways: 1) You and a partner look at the same TV screen, which divides into two unique ones within the approximate area of a letterboxed movie (this makes things quite small), or 2) if you have two TVs, two PS2s and two copies of the game, you can use an i.Link cable to replicate the arcade experience. In addition, you can even use the newly designed Guncon2 in single-player mode using two guns.

But the arcade ports don't stop with TC2. Namco has also thrown in home versions of its arcade shooters Quick & Crash (it's probably at an arcade near you right now) and Shoot Away II (remember that rifle skeet-shooting game from the '80s?). All the more reason to look forward to **September**.





The New Guncon

Packed in with every copy of Time Crisis II (and Namco's other upcoming light-gun game, Vampire Night) is what's tentatively being called simply the Guncon2, the newest iteration of the PS one's best gun peripheral. New additions to this version include a D-pad on the back, a reload button at the bottom, and USB compatibility. The Japanese version is pictured here; ours will be orange.

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Batman: Vengeance

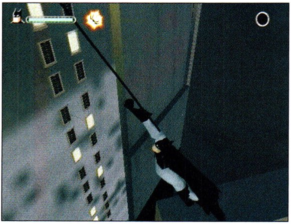
As dark as a Gotham City night

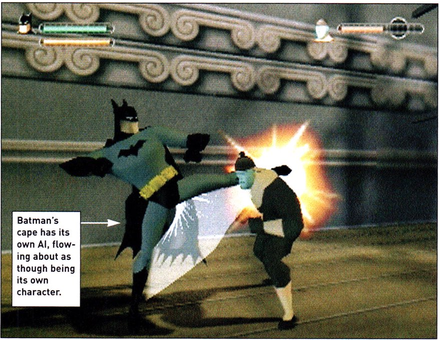
Don't take Batman: Vengeance's Teen rating for granted. Sure, it's based on the animated series on afternoon kids' TV. And sure, it's based on a superhero. But **Ubi Soft** is making a big deal about the fact that it's shooting for the 16-plus crowd with this one. No, you're not getting quite the grit of a Twisted Metal: Black, but Vengeance definitely delivers a more mature, darker take on superhero video games, one of its 11 FMV cinemas even being titled "Death of the Joker."

That's right, folks. The Clown Prince of Crime gets axed early in this game, soon after his extortion attempt from a mysterious woman Batman saves in Vengeance's opening scene. But it's not over there. Mr. Freeze and Poison Ivy also make eventual appearances, at first seemingly independent in their actions, but later appearing to be the small parts of a bigger scheme. In the process, Batman even gets framed for an attack on Commissioner Gordon, making saving Gotham all the less easy.

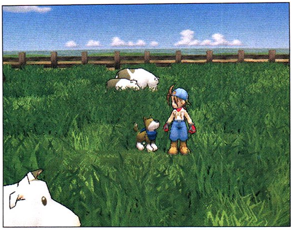
Throughout the game, Batman has access to a wide array of his trademark weapons, as well as vehicle-based levels. Control reminds us a bit of that seen in Spider-Man, as you take a mostly behind-the-character perspective with the ability to adjust the camera with a quick tap of R1. Hit R2, and you can take a first-person perspective, perfect for firing off a Batarang or slinging to another building with your Batgrapple. You can even call up Batgirl over your communicator for some help. (A member of the Vengeance team tells us a couple of Batman allies didn't make the cut—Robin because he's not adult enough for the game and Nightwing because "we didn't like his mullet." Fair enough.)

We've played the game's first few levels, and can see the potential of Vengeance. While neither the voices provided by actual *New Batman Adventures* actors (even Mark Hamill as the Joker!) nor the music are included yet, the game's look definitely echoes that of the cartoon well. This atmosphere alone should make Vengeance the best Batman game in years (for whatever that's worth). Hopefully, the occasional framerate problems and graphical glitches can be cleaned up by **October**.



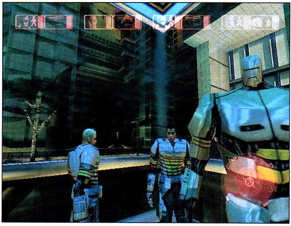


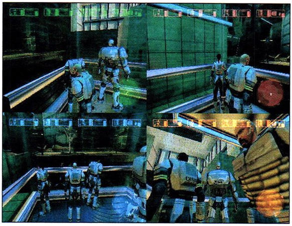
Batman's cape has its own AI, flowing about as though being its own character.



Harvest Moon: Save the Homeland

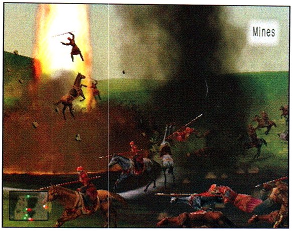
Natsume's offbeat farming—make that *life*—simulation comes to the PS2 this **fall**, with several upgrades. First off, the storyline has been expanded—it'll be more than just "work hard, save the farm" stuff. The graphics are finally 3D, albeit in pseudo-2D cel-shaded form. And for all you lonely hearts, the dating aspects are much deeper—although this time around you won't be able to get married. Alas.

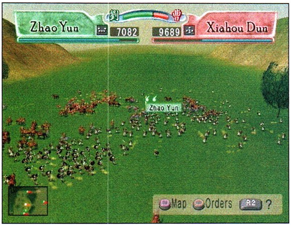




Project Eden

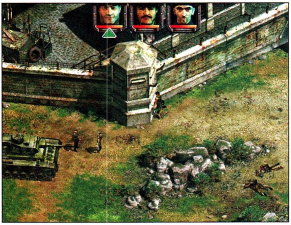
Eidos' upcoming team-oriented action/adventure title finally heads our way **next month**. In order to solve puzzles and make your way through the levels, you'll need to utilize the unique skills of your team members. Action takes place via both first- and third-person perspectives, and you can play cooperatively with as many as three friends in your quest to rescue missing technicians from the depths of a stacked-up futuristic city (think *Judge Dredd*).





Kessen II

Now that we've gotten a taste of the action in **Koei**'s **September** sequel to last year's hit real-time strategy, it's easy to see the promised improvements coming along nicely. Most immediately, we noticed the much more active battle scenes (as pictured above), as more soldiers than you can count fight one another at close range. It's also cool to work your way to field level, following your general as he instigates the next attack (possibly involving magic) you command.



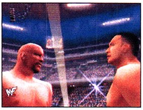
Commandos 2: Men of Courage

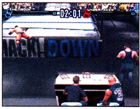
World War II provides the setting for the sequel to one of **Eidos'** biggest PC games of '98. In Commandos 2, guide your team of courageous men (even a woman or two) deep into enemy territory in an attempt to turn the tide in the favor of the Allies. Each character comes with his or her own specialty (thievery, seduction, etc.) as you strategically guide your selected commando through missions in Asia, North Africa, Europe and the Arctic. Try it out this **September**.

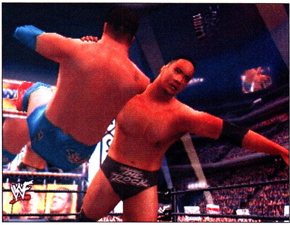
WWF SmackDown! Just Bring It

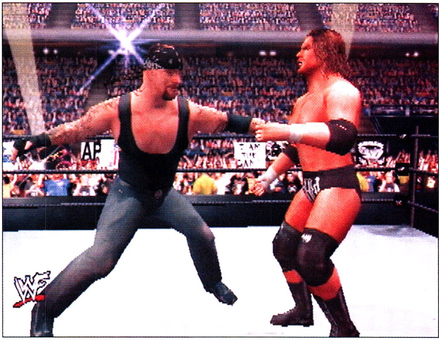
Finally, the People's Eyebrow

If you've kept any kind of tabs on wrestling games over the past couple years, you know that **THQ** has devised a can't-miss formula for its WWF franchise by having developer **Yuke's** working its tail off to keep each incarnation a raging good time. True to form, the company's third SmackDown! offering (and first WWF release for PS2), Just Bring It, looks so good so far that it'll likely lure any wrestling fans bored by the recent absence of superstars like Triple H, Chris Benoit and The Rock back into the squared circle this **October**. As well it should. The level of detail on the wrestlers is enough to interest anyone with an affinity for smacking an opponent around. Now that the wrestlers come constructed in 3D instead of being a collection of textures, they're fully privy to over 1,000 facial animations (including The Rock's trademark eyebrow). Also, mo-cap wasn't focused on wrestling moves. Instead, they used it to accurately display natural movements like walking and capturing each wrestler's look and feel.









PaRappa the Rapper 2

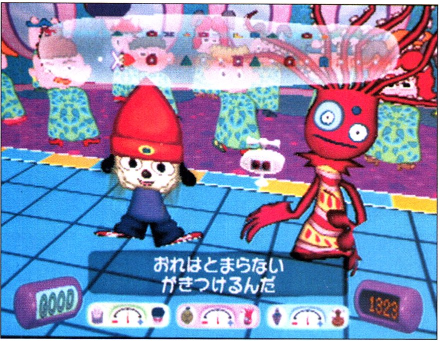
He may be flat, but he sure is phat

Pity poor PaRappa. The paper-thin pooch wins a lottery at the local burger shop and is "rewarded" with a 100-year supply of noodles. Sounds tasty, right? Not if you're stuck eating the pasty pasta every day and night! Enter Sunny, PaRappa's peppy girlfriend, who tries to cheer up our hero by cooking her best meal for him. But, you guessed it—it's another noodle dish! Understandably, PaRappa can't finish the dinner, which is quite upsetting to Sunny. She thinks her boyfriend is turning into a fattie.

Meanwhile, PaRappa Town will soon fall under the threat of a dark-suited group of malcontents...the Team Noodles.

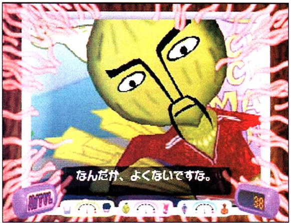
And that's how the next chapter of **Sony**'s beloved music series begins. Right. So it features the same kind of wacky storyline as before. And as you can see, the unique paper-cutout style also returns. The repeat-after-me rhythm-based gameplay is largely untouched, but PaRappa 2 does include a few new features. During lessons, you can choose Redo (when you miss and get "BAD," the master repeats the previous bar), Mark (which shows when you've pushed the buttons) and Difficulty (which varies the challenge to match your skill). A U.S. release date has yet to be announced.

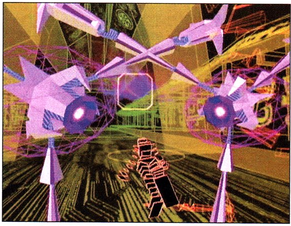
緑でも四角いボタンのほうだ～！



Homies

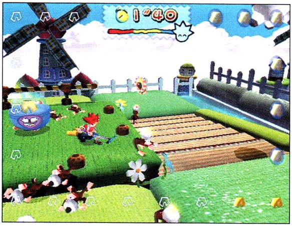
Once again, PaRappa has to square off against a series of "masters" to achieve his goal. The new cast of teachers features Guru Ant, Hairdresser Octopus, Beard Burger Master and Instructor Moosesha. Oh, and we can't forget Chop-Chop Master Onion (right), who ably guided PaRappa through the first stage of the original game. Other favorite characters also show up, including P.J. Berri, Sunny Funny and Um Jammer Lammy's band Milkcan.

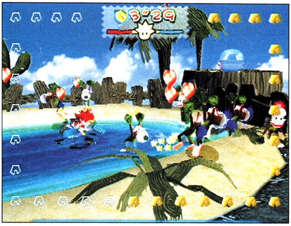




Rez

Part shooter, part music game—we guarantee that you've never seen anything like this new offering from **Sega**'s **United Game Artist** studio. Which is the point, according to producer Tetsuya Mizaguchi. He states that he wanted to do something completely new with this game, but also bring back the old-school gameplay absent from many of today's games. Basically, you shoot enemies to create music. Rez hits Japan this fall, with a likely U.S. release to follow.





Ape Escape 2001

Considered more of a refinement rather than a full-fledged sequel, **Sony** recently unleashed the newest installment to its Ape Escape series onto Japan. The game follows the basic premise of the original (chase down hordes of monkeys), except with one difference: Our hero Spike no longer catches the monkeys—he just vacuums their pants off. (Hey, we can't make this stuff up.) Odd, yes, but it's actually a lot of fun. No word yet on if we'll see it here. But you'd think so.

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Zoboomafoo 99

Coming Soon

August		
Final Fantasy Tactics (Great. Hits)	Sony CEA	Strategy
Hoshigami: Ruining Blue Earth	Atlus	Strategy
Madden NFL 2002	EA Sports	Sports
NFL GameDay 2002	Sony CEA	Sports
Power Shovel	Acclaim	Digging
Rayman Brain Games	Ubi Soft	Puzzle
Rescue Heroes: Molten Menace	Knowledge Adv.	Action
Rocket Power	THQ	X-Sports
Sesame Street Sports	NewKidCo	Sports
September		
Hot Wheels Extreme Racing	THQ	Racing
Looney Tunes: Sheep Raider	Infogrames	Puzzle
NASCAR Thunder 2002	EA Sports	Racing
NASCAR Racers	Infogrames	Racing
One Piece Mansion	Capcom	Puzzle
Power Rangers Time Force	THQ	Action
Razor Racing	Crave	Racing
Spider-Man 2—Enter: Electro	Activision	Action
SpongeBob Squarepants	THQ	Action
V.I.P.	Ubi Soft	Action
X-Men: Mutant Academy 2	Activision	Fighting
October		
Arc the Lad Collection	Working Designs	RPG
Arthur's Quiz Show	The Learning Co.	Trivia
Barbie Explorer	Mattel	Action
Dance Dance Revolution: Disney	Konami	Dancing
FIFA 2002	EA Sports	Sports
Jumpstart Kindergarten	Knowledge Adv.	Edutainment
Mary-Kate & Ashley: Crush Coarse	Acclaim	Action
Tales of Destiny 2	Namco	RPG
November		
Dragon Warrior VII	Enix	RPG
E.T.: Interplanetary Mission	NewKidCo	Action
Harry Potter & Sorcerer's Stone	EA Games	Action
Hooters Road Trip	Ubi Soft	Racing
Jesse James' 6-Shooter Shootout	Ubi Soft	Shooter
Mega Man X6	Capcom	Action
Monsters Inc.	Sony CEA	Action
NBA Live 2002	EA Sports	Sports
Scooby-Doo and the Cyber Chase	THQ	Action
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3	Activision	X-Sports
Twisted Metal: Small Brawl	Sony CEA	Action
Future Releases		
Black & White	TBA	Strategy
Crossroad Crisis	Agetec/A1 Games	Puzzle
Dexter's Laboratory	bam!	Action
Hidden & Dangerous	Take 2	Action
NBA ShootOut 2002	Sony CEA	Sports
Obee: Tale of the Circus	Sound Source	Edutainment
The Powerpuff Girls	bam!	Fighting
Snoopy's Party Adventure	Infogrames	Action
Syphon Filter 3	Sony CEA	Action
Tennis	Agetec/A1 Games	Sports
You Don't Know Jack PlayStation	Sierra	Trivia
Zoboomafoo	Encore	Edutainment
Unconfirmed Releases		
American Deer Hunter	Interplay	Sports
Bob the Builder	THQ	Building
C-12	Sony CEA	Action
M&M's	Havas	Action
Where/World/Carmen Sandiego?	The Learning Co.	Edutainment

Tales of Destiny 2

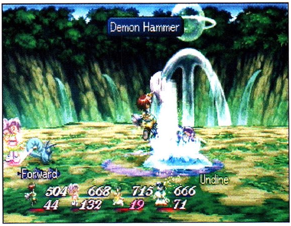
The sky is falling!

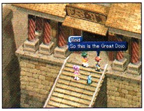
While **Namco**'s RPG reputation might not exactly equal that of the Squares of the world, what we've played of this **September**'s sequel to Tales of Destiny definitely has the goods to compete in the genre. Though lacking the intricate plot of a game like Final Fantasy IX, the gameplay should enthrall RPG fans for their entire 60-hour quest.

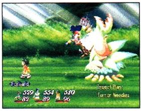
The rather basic story involves the weakening of the barrier protecting the land of Celestia from plummeting into the land of Infernia. All manner of catastrophe will result if the forcefield isn't restored. A young hunter named Reid and his childhood friends, Farah and Keele, set out to prevent the coming apocalypse by finding and caging the Craymels, ancient elemental beings who have the power to stop the Great Fall. Further adding to the drama is a mysterious man who would rather see both worlds destroyed.

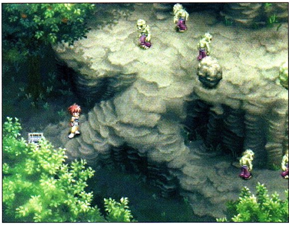
Players need to utilize skills from both the RPG and the adventure genres to complete this game: Battle takes place in real time with the player having the choice of either controlling his character manually or letting the CPU assist him. To survive, players need to jump over enemies, block, and link basic attacks and special moves into devastating combos. Other characters can be ordered to viciously assault the smallest enemy, run for their lives, protect their allies, or anything in between. Characters acquire increased abilities depending on the techniques they use to fight—gain enough experience with Reid's Lightning Blade and Demon Hammer attacks and the two can be combined into a powerful electrical slash. If you'd rather let the CPU control your fighters so that you can rain down fire and ice with a magic user, the choice is yours. Players can even summon the Craymels themselves for health restoration or devastating attacks on their enemies. And in an interesting twist on the standard RPG genre, Tales of Destiny 2 features both random enemy encounters plus skulking monsters that can be avoided, making adventuring a hybrid of Final Fantasy and Chrono Cross.

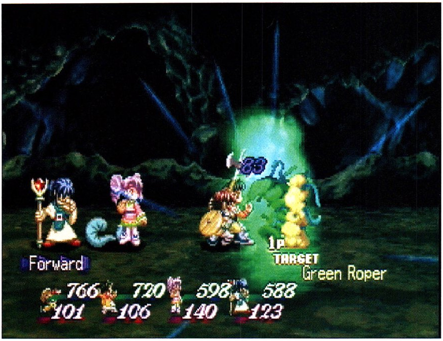
The end result is chaotic, two-dimensional warfare. Beautifully animated sprites (yes, *sprites*) give the game the feel of the best the SNES had to offer, with PS one special effects spicing up the action. It might not be cutting-edge, but it's still pretty damn fun.

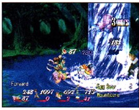



Reid
So this is the Great Dojo.









Special Moves

Tales of Destiny 2 expands the pioneering gameplay of the first title by giving all the characters special attacks based on simple controller motions. Each character has four motion slots for move allocation, and Namco has kept them simple. So don't worry if you've never managed to throw Ryu's fireball or even complete a single maze in Ms. Pac-Man. The hardest motion in this game is back, then forward-plus-Circle. But if you can't manage that, we can't help you.

Health
111
Forward
1P
TARGET
Green Roper
2
333
125
390
74
308
143
448
101

Formation
Select a formation.
Setting
Switch
Formation 1
Formation 2
Formation 3
1P
Meredy
Farah
Keele
Reid

Mazel
Well...!?
Did you find Undine?

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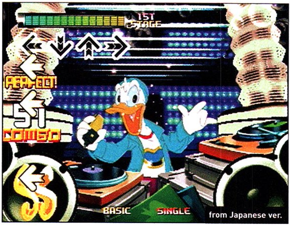
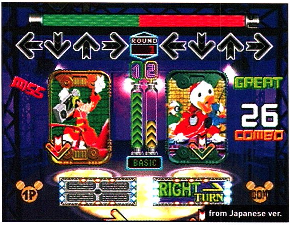
all data as of 7/9/01

Dance Dance Rev.: Disney's Rave

Back in February, we showed you the Japanese version of this Disneyfied take on Dance Dance Revolution, but only recently has it been confirmed by **Konami** for a U.S. release this **October**. We're still not sure on the changes being made, but we're hoping the remakes of oldies ("Johnny B. Goode," "Disco Inferno," etc.) make the cut along with the given Disney classics ("Zip-A-Dee-Doo-Dah," "Mickey Mouse March" and more). And they'd better include Dance Magic mode!


1ST STAGE
PERFECT!
51
COMBO
BASIC
SINGLE

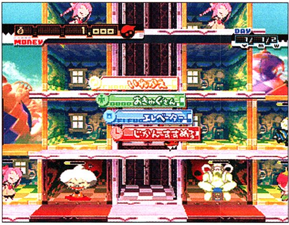
from Japanese ver.


ROUND
MISS
GREAT
26
COMBO
BASIC
1P
COM
RIGHT TURN

from Japanese ver.

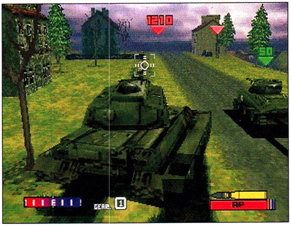
One Piece Mansion

Quite possibly the most unique action/puzzle game to come along in years—we've never really played anything like it—One Piece Mansion comes your way **next month** from **Capcom**. While by no means as simple or easy to pick up and play as a Tetris or a Mr. Driller, managing your apartment complex to satisfy your colorful tenants (a Sumo Wrestler, a Ninja and more) does show potential in the addictiveness department. And really, what more can you ask for?


MONEY
1,000
DAY

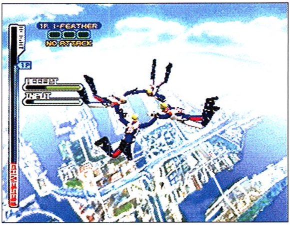
Panzer Front

When Panzer Front is released **this month**, don't go expecting **Agetec**'s version of Battletanx. Rather, this game seats you behind fictitious and real-life World War II tanks in what will most likely be the truest tank simulation to hit the PS one, as you team up with other steel behemoths en route to accomplishing your missions. Use a variety of weaponry to down enemy tanks. Just don't count on moving yours around too easily—just like any real *simulation* should be.



Skydiving Extreme

Let us be the first to say that we'll be particularly impressed if **Natsume**'s **recently released** skydiving title comes anywhere close to replicating the adrenaline rush and pure thrill of the real thing. But while to expect such might seem a little unrealistic for *any* video game, there might just be some quality gameplay in there as you input commands within a time limit to make up to 42 aerial formations and lead your team to victory. We'll tell you for sure next month.

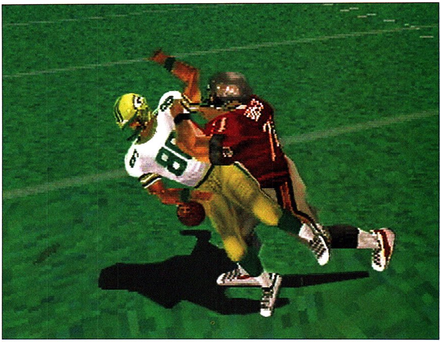


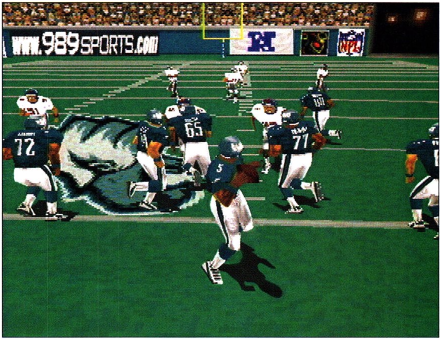
REPLAY
RETRY
QUICK
EXIT

NFL GameDay 2002

We *hope* it competes

So far, we're limited on what we know about **989 Sports'** latest version of NFL GameDay. We *know* Dick Enberg will tell us what's going on, while *Monday Night Football*'s Dan Fouts chimes in with zingers. We *know* Philadelphia Eagles Pro Bowl QB Donovan McNabb has done motion capture and will grace the cover. We *think* the game will look and feel like its recent predecessors. We *hope* this isn't the case. We *hope* the players won't slide as if running on grass-colored ice. We *hope* quarterbacks can't launch 40-yard passes while running backward. We *hope* this is the type of football found in GameDay '98. But we're not holding our breath.





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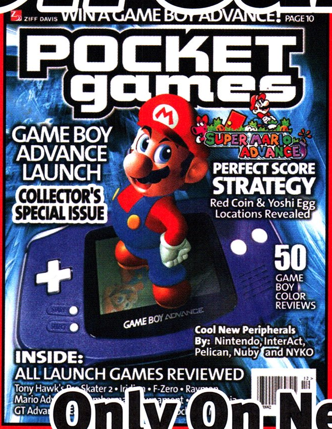

ZIFF DAVIS WIN A GAME BOY ADVANCE! PAGE 10

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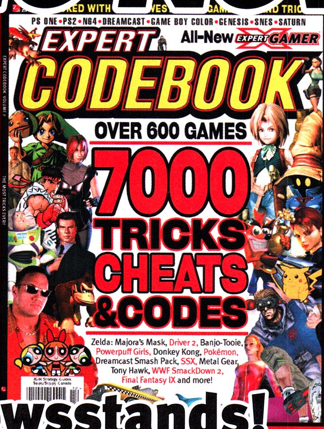

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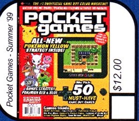

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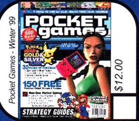

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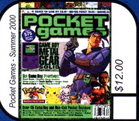

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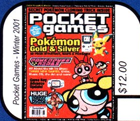

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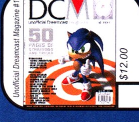

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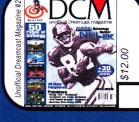

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Dragon Warrior VII

A tale of Enix proportions

The top-selling Japanese PS one game *ever* comes to America this **November**, when **Enix** releases Dragon Warrior VII (known out East as Dragon Quest VII). As the first Dragon Warrior game released in the U.S. since 1992, the latest in the popular series puts players behind a silent protagonist (much like Crono and Serge from the Chrono Cross series) in a traditional turn-based RPG. The player's character meets up with his female friend Maribel, an incorrigible prince named Kiefer, and a young fisherman named Aluse. All start on the tiny island of Fishbel, the only land in an endless sea. But one day Kiefer and his friends stumble upon the entrance to forbidden ruins and find curious pieces of stone. Assembling the stones leads to the creation of completely new islands whose inhabitants have been living there for centuries. But where were they before? What magic has kept them hidden? These are the questions players must answer as they make their way through their adventure.

Dragon Warrior VII returns old ideas to the U.S. RPG market with the help of new technology. A proprietary data-streaming system has effectively killed all load times in the game—there's not a single pause between entering rooms, dungeons or battles. Place this two-disc set into your PS2 and you'll experience one of the fastest, smoothest RPGs to date.

Also increasing the speed of the game is an adjustable combat system, which allows players to give broad commands to certain characters. The sorceress Maribel can be instructed to automatically use magic instead of weaponry, for example, whereas the valiant Kiefer grants his enemies only the taste of steel. Entire battles can take place with the press of a single button as the party springs instantly into action, but when the going gets tough, players may still choose to wield explicit control over each character's every move. Gamers can recruit non-player characters to create their own city, collect and tame monsters for a zoo, and learn 54 vocations with the popular Dragon Warrior job system. It all amounts to over 100 hours of gameplay. In other words, RPG fans, prepare to kiss your social lives goodbye.

I like you just the way you are! But, still...

Shah Kief Mari
H 23 H 53 H 21
M 17 M 0 M 25

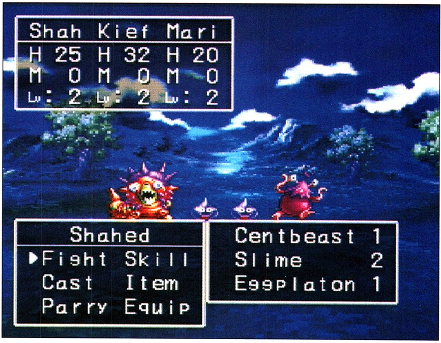
Kiefer got goose bumps!

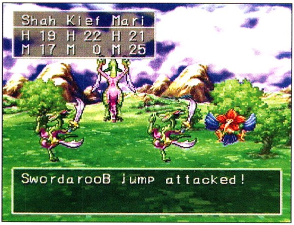
5G
▶Buy
Sell
End

*Here you go, Shahed.

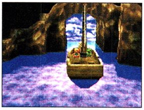
Shah Kief Mari
H 20 H 45 H 30
M 10 M 0 M 2
Lv: 5 Lv: 6 Lv: 6
▶Fight
Talk
Plan
Flee

Kiefer:
What? You've deciphered it? So what does it say,





SwordarooB jump attacked!



Got Some Time on Your Hands?

There's no question that Enix is proud about the length of its epic. "It takes three hours before you even get into your first battle," boasts John Laurence, the game's product manager. The time leading up to your first encounter (quite possibly with a loveable slime or two) is spent exploring Estard Isle as the story builds. And what a long story it is! The game's total amount of text weighs in at over 17,000 pages.

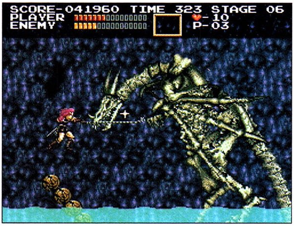
Castlevania Chronicle

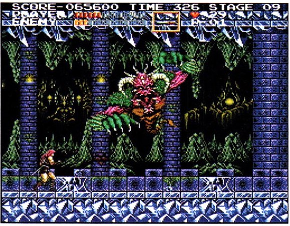
Drac is back...at least in Japan

Unknown in America, the X68000 was a popular personal computer during the early '90s in Japan. **Konami** supported the platform with a bunch of games, including an original installment in its well-known Castlevania series called Akumajou Dracula. Now, almost a decade after that game was originally released, Konami has revamped it for PS one with some upgrades. Titled Castlevania Chronicle, the rerelease hit Japan this past summer.

In many ways, you can actually consider Chronicle a remake of the NES's original Castlevania. Konami has completely redone the graphics of its first level, for instance, and other levels, like the laboratory, remain similar. However, the game's many completely new stages help establish Chronicle as its own game.

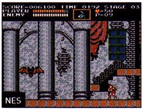
As a port of the X68000 title, the game's graphics look a bit dated (very 16-bit). But Konami has helped modernize it in other areas with the inclusion of new art, a new CG intro and new music—stuff that makes it something not only the hardcore Castlevania fan can dig. It's too bad that right now it looks as though the Japanese will be the only ones to have access. Care to change that? Then send an e-mail to support@konami.com. Now!

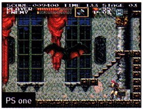




Remade Again

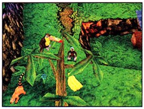
The first stage of the original Castlevania for the Nintendo Entertainment System (left) has been remade for Castlevania Chronicle (right). Other levels also feature similarities.





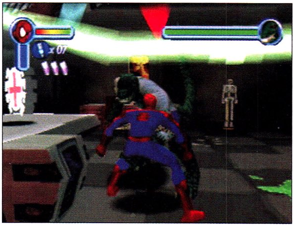
Zoboomafoo

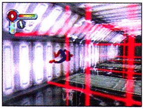
Since 1999, *Zoboomafoo With the Kratt Brothers* has become one of the most popular children's shows on PBS, with its unique mix of live action, claymation and animation. Thanks to **Encore Software**, that crazy lemur Zoboo and friends head to your PS one in the company's first of what will likely become several edutainment releases for the system. This **fall**, kids ages 3 to 8 can learn about animals and their habitats as Zoboo guides them on adventurous endeavors.

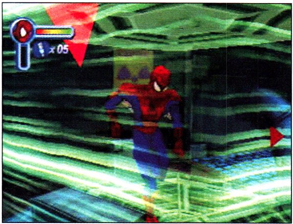


Spider-Man 2-Enter: Electro

Since our big preview of Spider-Man 2 last month, **Activision** has released more exciting information about its **September** release. For one thing, the Lizard joins the previously announced Sandman, Shocker and Electro on the game's list of supervillains. Voice talent has also been confirmed, including Rino Romano and the cast of *Spider-Man Unlimited* in their respective roles and Spidey's incomparable creator Stan Lee returning to narrate the adventure.







ICO

THE BEST GAME YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF

By Joe Rybicki with special thanks to Yutaka Ohbuchi and *PlayStation Underground*

E3, 2000: A pair of game kiosks in the Sony booth goes nearly unnoticed by the majority of attendees. Those who catch a glimpse of this oddly titled "Ico" quickly stop and stare. The scene shows what appears to be a kid in a funny hat swinging a two-by-four furiously through an enemy made up entirely of shadowy particles; bits of whatever-it-is go flying like tufts of smoke. The animation is exceptional. The graphics are utterly unique.

The game is almost entirely ignored.

E3, 2001: A row of four game kiosks in the Sony booth offers playable demos of this same game. The line in front of each is rarely less than two or three bodies deep. Observers are introduced to the boy's waifish companion, a slight, elfin girl with a faint, almost supernatural-looking glow. The interplay between the two is heart-wrenching. The environments are staggering.

This time, the viewers take notice. Certain discriminating media outlets (such as the magazine you're holding) name Ico the most promising game of the show. Others offer brief-to-middling coverage, but some continue to ignore it completely. Though word begins to spread through Internet newsgroups and message boards, the passage is slow; the coverage, spotty.

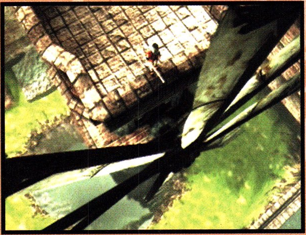
Well, it's time to learn about this unique, exceptional product. It's time to take a look around this extraordinary world. It's time to get to know Ico.

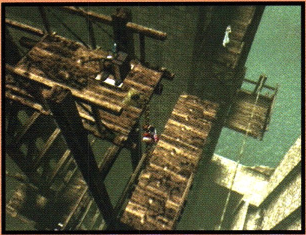
Painting by David Grove

"WE OBSESSED."

That's how producer Kenji Kaido describes the design process of Ico. "We worked by hand to portray our imaginations. We wanted to reproduce exactly what was in our heads."

The obsession shows. Rarely has a video game stopped so many in their tracks with its stunning visual style. Transporting the rapt viewer into an ancient castle, a crumbling, derelict masterpiece of architecture, Ico weaves a spell around the player with a power few games have reached. It's not just graphics, or story, or characters that create this enchantment, but an equal combination of all these...and much, much more.





SETTING THE BAR

The spectacular graphics are undoubtedly a major piece of the Ico puzzle. The gorgeous screens you see here (and let's note right now that these full-page scenes are *actual gameplay shots,* not renders or "conceptualizations") certainly offer an adequate impression of the visual style, but static screens can't tell the whole story. Without seeing the game in motion, you don't quite realize that the environments are entirely real-time, not prerendered. It takes the smooth, sensible camera work to drive that point home. Similarly, you can't appreciate the atmospheric effects, like the shifting mist and the flickering torches. And you can't really understand how much realism is conveyed by the detailed shadows: The characters cast shadows, not only on their surroundings, but on their own bodies as well. It's a subtle effect, to be sure, but it makes a world of difference.

Without question, the visual element of Ico is one of its most astounding traits. And that was intentional. Director Fumito Ueda describes the aspirations of the design team simply: "We wanted to create a game that looks like an Impressionist painting." This is the reason the game boasts such a stunning mix of soft-focus characters and gritty stone textures—and of blinding light and deepest shadow, a contrast that is another of Ico's defining characteristics. While much of the game takes place in dim, dusty stone halls, the frequent outdoor segments are so bright that you almost want to shield your eyes from the glare. This, too, was absolutely intentional, another way to make the game look like a work of art. "Many games feature scenes with a clear sky," muses Ueda, "but those still look cloudy to me. By making the outdoor scenes look overexposed, I think we were able to produce the image of a clear sky in people's minds."

Also essential to the Ico mystique is the actual construction of the castle in which the game takes place. From enormous, ruined halls filled with dust that's kicked up with every footstep, to balconies perched so high atop the castle's walls that they actually trigger feelings of vertigo in those susceptible to a fear of heights, the setting is shockingly lifelike. The castle oozes a sense of hidden secrets and lost dynasties, conveying a definite "lived-in" feeling.

What also helps portray a sense of realism is the intricate way in which each area is connected. You'll pass through a large area and notice a balcony far off in the distance, for example—and later, you'll step through a door and realize that you're standing on that balcony you noticed hours ago, the one you thought was just background scenery. Almost no space is wasted here; your path through the castle will cross through different segments of the same areas multiple times. And yet it all hangs together with a surprising logic.

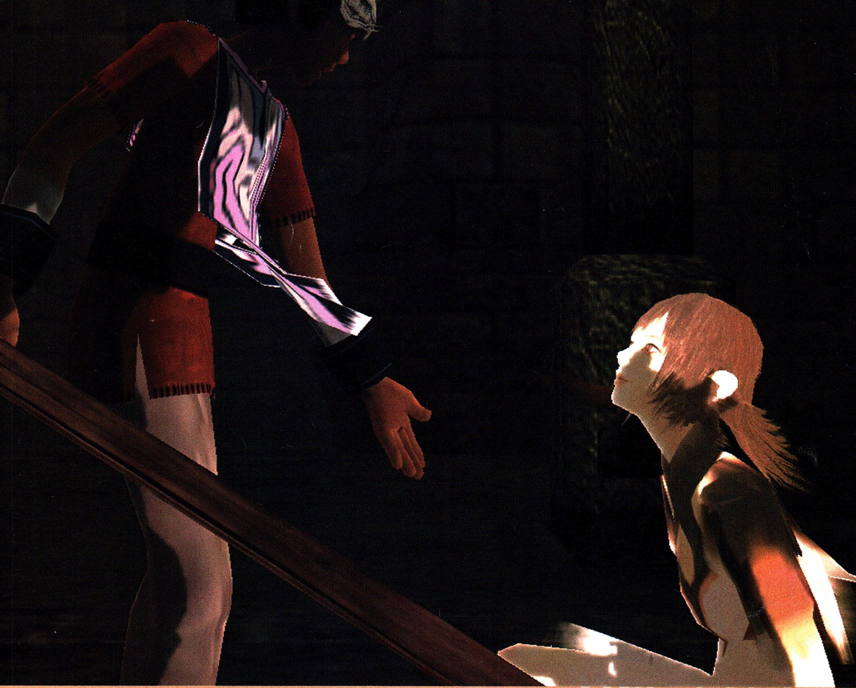
It made us wonder if the designers of Ico have done formal studies of architecture. We were in for a surprise: "No, none of us have that kind of background," admits Ueda. "I think that's why we could build architecture in the game that's so free from existing architectural technique." Surely, then, it must have been quite a challenge to put all this together? "Not really. Some of the smaller areas only took a week. The larger ones took about three months." Of course, it must be noted that the average work day of the Japanese game developer is about 18 hours, but nevertheless it seems like quite an achievement.

IF YOU THINK IT LOOKS GOOD, WAIT 'TIL YOU PLAY IT

PlayStation
DVD
PlayStation 2

No doubt the images and ideas surrounding Ico will intrigue you. We know you'll want to get your hands on the game. Well, have we got a treat for you: Next month marks the start of our bimonthly collaboration with *PlayStation Underground,* Sony's magazine-on-a-disc. Thus, the October issue (available on newsstands in early September) will include a PS2-only DVD with a playable demo of Ico—along with eight other playables, including Soul Reaver 2 and Spy Hunter. The following DVD, in the December issue, will feature a behind-the-scenes look at Ico, complete with an interview with Kenji Kaido. Don't miss 'em!

> "We wanted to create a game that looks like an Impressionist painting."
>
> —Director Fumito Ueda



CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE

Even so, all this gorgeous scenery would be nothing but static art without a story unfolding within. But what's odd about the story is, well, there isn't one—not in the usual sense, anyway. There is a setting, and a goal, and significant events in between. The setting: A young boy is born with an odd disfigurement—he's got horns!—and is sent off to the ancient castle nearby to be sacrificed in order to cleanse his village. The goal: to escape the castle. The events in between: He meets up with a young girl who is also a prisoner, decides to bring her along in his escape, and...well, that's all we're giving you for now. But beyond this loose outline of events, there isn't what you'd call a "story," not in the way that a Final Fantasy or even a Resident Evil has a story. In a way, the player *creates* the story, in a manner seldom seen in gaming.

How is this done, you ask? The answer is simple: character. Ico, the main player in this fluid drama, and Yorda, his otherworldly ward, are so expressive in their range of animations that they convey a wealth of emotion while barely saying a word to each other.

Their virtual silence isn't surprising, though, as they don't even speak the same language. In fact, neither of them speaks any language that would make any sense to anyone on the planet (well, except maybe their creators). Ico's spoken tongue, gibberish that is designed to resemble an Asiatic language, is subtitled in English; Yorda's Nordic-sounding speech is subtitled in a fictional alphabet that bears a slight resemblance to Egyptian hieroglyphics. That's right, not even the player understands what she's saying—you must make your own deductions about her intentions. (Are you starting to get a feel for the unusual nature of this game?) Sure, at first the idea may sound ridiculous—and it's certainly possible that gamers may end up more befuddled than entranced by Ico's design. Like a film that leaves the interpretation of its "true meaning" up to the viewer (like, say, *A.I.*), the game runs the risk of players just not "getting it." But from what we've seen, Kaido and Ueda are willing to take that risk.

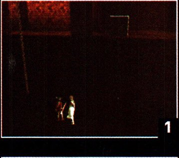
For better or worse, much of the atmosphere and emotion in the game is conveyed by visual means. Part of that is the exceptional animation. With Ueda listing the classic games Out of This World and Prince of Persia as his two biggest game-related influences, lifelike animation should be all but expected. But don't make the mistake of thinking that this realism is a result of motion capture. "If you import realistic physics into a game," warns Kaido, "you get something that you didn't expect: It's too realistic. The key is to present it so that it *looks* realistic, but still works in the game. It took us a tremendous amount of time to master that balance."

A QUESTION OF CHARACTER

But it's not just the basic animations that make the game come to life, no matter how exceptional they are; rather, it's the design of the characters, and the manner in which they visually interact with each other, that causes the player to make such an unusual emotional investment. On one extreme is fragile-looking Yorda: tall and thin and radiating a pure, white, angelic glow. On the other extreme are the shadow beasts: squat, bloated images of pure black corruption. And somewhere

NOW WHAT?

When you finally get a chance to play Ico for yourself, expect to get stuck. You'll encounter plenty of puzzles that will require some serious thought and investigative work to overcome. But there is a basic method of approaching the puzzles that will help you figure them out quickly: Put yourself in Ico's shoes. "The things that you would think of first in real life don't come to you so easily in a game," says Kenji Kaido. "There are plenty of puzzles in Ico where if you think straightforwardly you can figure it out, but if you think of it just as a game, you'll find it incredibly hard. We didn't plan it that way; it just sort of happened. So there are mind traps like that—but the real trap is that people make the mistake of *thinking* there's a trap, so they take a detour and don't trust what their real-life sensibilities tell them." In fact, there are areas where it's possible to beat the puzzle without even having the game turned on. Some stages are so cunningly constructed, and yet so logical, that if you just sit down and think about it for a while you'll realize what you need to do. Also helpful are some universal problem-solving tactics. First, remember your goal: Don't lose sight of the fact that your real mission is to *help Yorda* progress through the castle. Second, keep your eyes open: Many places require a thorough investigation of the environment to make the solution clear. And finally, don't give up—but don't be afraid to take a break when you get stuck; solutions will often come while your mind is elsewhere.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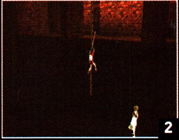
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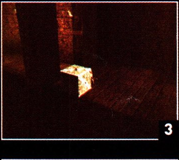
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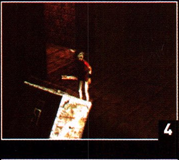
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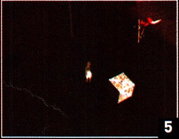
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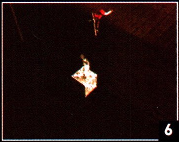
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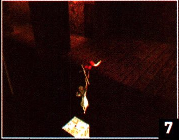
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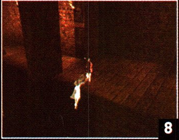
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in between is Ico, decked out in striking reds and blues, with the lanky build of an average 10-year-old. Yorda glides with a fluid, delicate grace; the shadow beasts pounce with the ferocity of starving animals; and Ico moves with an endearing clumsiness that betrays his age.

It's when Ico and Yorda interact, though, that the artistry of the character design comes through. When freed, Yorda appears frightened and disoriented; in order to lead her out of the castle, Ico must take her hand and practically drag her to freedom. As a result, much of the game is spent with the two quite literally linked. It doesn't take long to develop an emotional attachment to Yorda under these conditions, especially when she exhibits such a charming air of helplessness. She's physically or emotionally incapable of the energetic feats that come so easy to Ico—climbing chains, shimmying up pipes, leaping huge chasms, and the like—and so Ico must either find alternate routes for her to take or physically assist her. When you see Ico standing at the edge of a terrifying jump, holding his hand out patiently, saying unequivocally, through simple body language, that he's there to catch her—that one image conveys more than pages of written text could. And when you see her gathering herself for the jump, leaping, catching his hand and dangling off in space while he strains to pull her up, it tears at the heart.

A TRUE PUZZLE GAME

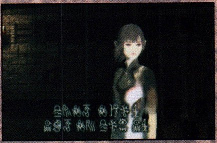
So at last we come to the real heart of Ico, the game at the center of all the beautiful trappings. In spite of all the subtlety and complexity of construction, the basic goal is very simple: Figure out a way to get Yorda from point A to point B. In a sense, this makes Ico a puzzle game in the truest meaning of the phrase. Using your skills of deduction and observation, you, the player, must figure out how to use the environment and the objects within it to help both Ico and Yorda escape the castle. (And before you start thinking you'll just ditch the poor girl, be aware that once the two meet up, they *must* stick together. If Yorda dies, it's Game Over; furthermore, you need both characters present to operate the "Save Couches.") Again, as with any game with this kind of focus, Ico certainly runs the risk of aiming above the head of the average gamer. With it being the kind of game that requires a substantial investment of mental energy, the puzzles may just frustrate, and thereby alienate, a significant chunk of the gaming populace.

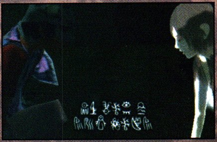
But the designers have done their best to counteract this risk by ensuring that the challenges make sense within the framework of the game. "We implemented the puzzles in such a way that they don't look manufactured," says Ueda. "They don't look separate from the game. We started the design of each level with a simple puzzle idea. Then we played the levels and added more puzzles based on ideas we had while playing."

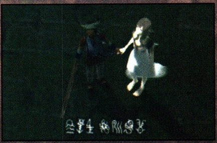
Of course, this isn't an *exclusively* cerebral game. The shadow monsters aren't just there for show; these guardians of the castle are fixated on Yorda. They *really* don't want her to leave, and you're going to have to stop them from drawing her down into the very stones of the castle. Ico's primary weapon—at first, anyway—is a simple two-by-four. Don't laugh; when swung with the

Come again?

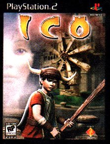
Don't be surprised if you can't quite make out what Ico and Yorda are saying in the game; their languages are entirely fictional. We asked Fumito Ueda why the choice for manufactured languages instead of real ones. "In part," he says, "it was to help make their conversations brief. We thought that leaving the languages open to interpretation would help stimulate the players' imaginations." And as far as the actual construction of the languages goes: "They do follow linguistic rules," says Ueda, "to a certain degree. But we really concentrated on how they sounded rather than how they were written. To make them sound like an actual language, we had to do things like playing tapes backward and using all kinds of effects. It took a lot of work, and we ended up going back to the drawing board several times."







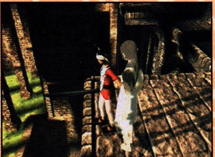
DON'T JUDGE THIS GAME BY ITS COVER



We have to admit that in spite of—or perhaps because of—our appreciation for the game, we were a bit taken aback when we saw the disappointingly ordinary box art. The style is jarringly different from the art in the game itself; frankly, we think they could have just run a screenshot on the box and been better off.

exuberance of a 10-year-old defending his new crush, a stick is a powerful weapon. (And the beasts know it; some of the most memorable scenes of the game consist of Ico swinging his board in a wide arc with Yorda at his back, keeping a horde of enemies at bay.) It won't be as easy as just standing and swinging away, of course. A few distinct personalities cause the monsters to behave in different ways. While some will plod right in for the kill, others dodge just out of reach, only moving in when Ico's back is turned. Many of the larger beasts can sprout wings and take to the air, swooping upon Yorda to drag her away. And the smallest ones—the nasty little spider-looking crawlies—will *never* advance while either Ico or Yorda is facing in their direction. Instead, they continually attempt to circle around for a rear attack. It's pretty creepy.

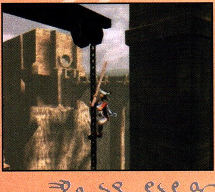
Actually, *all* of the shadow beasts are creepy, especially since you never really know when they'll materialize. They come right out of the stone floors, and if they get their hands on Yorda they'll sink right back down where they came from. That's one reason why Ueda decided on the form of the monsters: "Their appearance fits their behavior: They emerge from nowhere and disappear to anywhere." The other reasons are more pragmatic: "If they looked realistic, it could be too graphic when they attack Yorda. Plus, the contrast between them and Yorda makes it easier for the player to distinguish between the two from a distance."

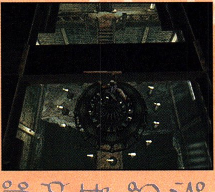


NO LIMITS

Whether it be that creepy tickling on the back of your neck when enemies are around or the endearing way in which Ico strains to hoist Yorda to a high ledge, it's remarkable that a video game can manage to convey such emotion—especially considering that the game communicates with the player almost exclusively through such indirect means as lighting and animation. Could this be what Sony had in mind when they dubbed the PS2 processor the "Emotion Engine"? Undoubtedly. Because if it weren't for the hefty power of the processor, the programmers would not have access to the range of tools that they use so expertly with Ico. The huge spaces, the unusual lighting, the unique enemies, the incredibly diverse and complex range of animation for both characters...there's no way this game could have been done on the PS one—at least not with anything approaching the level of beauty and clarity you see on these pages.

And Kaido knows it. "The PS2 has incredible computing power," he says. "Three months ago, or half a year ago, there were things we thought were incredible—things we imagined doing, thinking 'if we could do this, we would be satisfied'—but the more we work with the system, the more skilled our designers become. So now we realize that there's no limit to what we can do. None at all."





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THE FINAL SCORE

●●●●●

We rate games on a five-point scale. So, .5 is terrible, 2.5 is mediocre and 5 is superb. Get it?

Hey America, Don't Forget Me!

This month, while reviewing another one of Agetec's $10 budget games, I started thinking about something. You know, it's pretty damn cool that because of Sony's budget price program we're getting to play a whole bunch of import games that we normally wouldn't see here. Yeah, sure, maybe they're not the greatest games in the world, but they're still pretty cool to check out—especially at that price!

But it also got me thinking about how many other games there are that could be rescued (so to speak) by this program. Take for example Sony's Vib Ribbon, a game that was released in Japan and Europe, but never made it here. For those unaware, Vib Ribbon is a rather unique music/platforming title from PaRappa the Rapper creator Masaya Matsuura. Apparently, because of its rather simplistic look (all black and white, composed of 2D stick figure-style characters) SCEA decided to pass on it—even though the game was already completely translated into English. So yeah, what about Vib Ribbon? To me, this seems like it would make an ideal budget title. It's simple, it's short, but it's also pretty fun. And it sure as heck would be a rather good game to pick up for 10 dollars, I can assure you that much.

Vib Ribbon is just one example, though. Here's another: Konami's Castlevania Chronicle, a PS one remake of an older Castlevania title—but one that was never released in the U.S. I can understand Konami's hesitation to release the game in the U.S. market—it's not exactly cutting-edge, with its rather dated look. And it's definitely not as good as the previously released Castlevania: SOTN. However, I ask why Konami doesn't consider bringing over Chronicle as a budget title. Sure, it's not the greatest Castlevania game out there, but for $10, Castlevania fans *will* buy it. And sure, perhaps Konami might not take in a massive profit off of a budget title like this, but it sure as heck would please the fans of the series aching for a new installment. And I'm guessing it wouldn't hurt the franchise to have a new installment on the shelves either. And perhaps with your encouragement (see this month's preview), Konami will consider going this route with the game, especially considering it requires little translation effort.

What's unfortunate, though, is that quite often companies like Agetec will want to bring certain titles over from Japan or Europe to the U.S., but the creators of the games are reluctant to allow them out of their hands—even though they themselves have no interest in ever releasing them here. Take for example Tobal 2 from Square. Still regarded by many hardcore fighting game enthusiasts as one of the best fighting games ever made, Tobal 2 has never found its way to the States. The sad fact is, Square still has no current plans to release it here—even though it would make an ideal budget title. Several other third parties know this, and would snap up the gem immediately if Square would ever license it out. But the chances of that ever happening are next to nil. Other companies, even SCEA itself, are just as protective of their franchises. C-12, an SCEE title that was only released in Europe, was also sought after by third parties as a budget game for the States. Unfortunately, the game has already disappeared off of the radar, and now has a very small chance of ever being released here. A big shame.

I guess I'm still mystified by the whole budget games program and how it has so much seemingly unused potential. Most of the games released thus far have been the crap that the game makers realized just couldn't be sold at a normal price. And unfortunately, even though Agetec has been doing a great job of bringing over some rather fun Japanese titles, they've really put little effort into ensuring that they're of good quality. Releasing Shooter: Space Shot with all sorts of translation mistakes just makes me realize how they see this $10 market: as a place to make a quick buck off of unsuspecting kids. I'd love to see SCEA step up and attempt to make the budget program into something a little more than it currently is. First, ensure that the games have at least some quality control, and second, perhaps entice companies to bring out some of their forgotten classics. And they can start by bringing out Vib Ribbon here on their own.

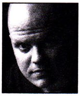
Sam Kennedy
News Editor

MEET THE CRITICS

JOHN DAVISON

John got engaged this month, and to a lovely American girl too, so it doesn't look like we're *ever* going to be able to get rid of his funny-talking Britishness.

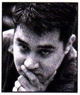
FAVORITE GENRES: Racing, Action, Adventure
CURRENT FAVORITES: Ico, GT3, Twisted Metal: Black
CAN'T WAIT FOR: Devil May Cry, Silent Hill 2, Metal Gear Solid 2



JOE RYBICKI

Getting a Rune-inscribed battle-axe in the mail sent Joe on a rampage throughout the office, laying waste to everything in his path. We're sending the bill to Rockstar.

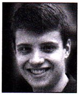
FAVORITE GENRES: Adventure, Puzzle, RPG
CURRENT FAVORITES: Ico, City Crisis, next month's demo DVD!
CAN'T WAIT FOR: Baldur's Gate, GTA3, Smuggler's Run 2



GARY STEINMAN

Inspired by the UFC fight he attended, Gary decided to use brutal submission moves to punish anyone who misses a deadline...hey, wait! Can you do a chokehold on yourself?!

FAVORITE GENRES: RPG, Adventure, Action
CURRENT FAVORITES: Ico
CAN'T WAIT FOR: Hoshigami, Okage, Tales of Destiny 2, FFX, Monster Rancher 3



CHRIS BAKER

Yesterday, C-Bake saw the small plant in front of his neighbor's door and, just for a moment, actually thought, "I need to pick up the herb." Too much Resident Evil? You bet.

FAVORITE GENRES: Action, RPG, Adventure, Sports
CURRENT FAVORITES: NCAA Football 2002, Code: Veronica
CAN'T WAIT FOR: Baldur's Gate, Time Crisis II, UT Vols football

TODD ZUNIGA

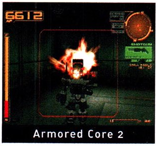
New York City. Todd's kind of town. There he read to a gracious audience, there he blew $175 on a pair of Campers, there he sipped water from a cup the size of his head.

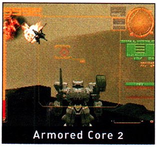
FAVORITE GENRES: Sports, Extreme Sports, Literary Humor
CURRENT FAVORITES: NBA Street, Freedonian.com, Ico
CAN'T WAIT FOR: SSX Tricky, Grand Theft Auto 3, THPS3

SAM KENNEDY

Sam has been getting ready for his big trip to Europe. Will he go singing in the mountains? Come back 30 pounds heavier? Come back at all? Tune in next month to find out

FAVORITE GENRES: Action, RPG
CURRENT FAVORITES: Ico, Twisted Metal: Black, Castlevania: Chronicle, FFX, Code Veronica
CAN'T WAIT FOR: Jak & Daxter, The Spirits Within PS2 DVD


Armored Core 2


Armored Core 2

Armored Core 2: Another Age

Publisher Agetec
Developer From Software
Web Site www.agetec.com

This fifth installment in the mech game series that refuses to numerically increase is actually my favorite yet. Technically somewhat of an expansion pack for Armored Core 2 (it makes use of the same graphics engine and whatnot, but features all new stages), Another Age has **better designed missions than the original** and, as a result, is a lot more fun. The game also addresses some of the complaints of the first AC2, such as the lack of analog control. Now that it's in, it just plays a lot better.

That's not to say that Another Age is a great game, though. I still have a lot of problems with the Armored Core gameplay—such as the mechs turning so slowly, the bombardment of missiles from unseen enemies, and the **rather quirky controls**. It's really frustrating to control your vision with the trigger buttons on the PS2 pad—isn't that something that would be perfectly suited for the analog sticks? Little annoyances like that are what keep the Armored Core games merely average, when they could be something much more.

But just like the other Armored Core games, if you're one who lets that sort of stuff slide, you'll probably love this. And if you have the previous AC2, you can take your stored mech data and import it into Another Age. But like the game itself, only hardcore fans will care about that.

Final Score ● ● ● ◐

Sam Kennedy

TEEN
Players: 1-2
Memory Card: 85 KB

City Crisis

City Crisis

City Crisis

Publisher Take 2
Developer Syscom
Web Site www.take2games.com

It seems like a faintly silly concept at first: Fly a helicopter around a city, put out fires and airlift survivors to safety. But once I got the hang of the **somewhat unintuitive controls**, I really started to enjoy myself. The entertainment reached a peak about three hours into it.

Then I beat the game.

Now, having a full-time job as I do, I'm the last person to wail about games being too short. I mean, who has time in today's hectic world to invest 100 hours into a game? But gimme a break—*three hours?* OK, I reasoned, it's an arcade-style game, so maybe there are rewards for getting better scores on the missions! So I went back and started replaying the missions with a focus on speed. And eventually, I got "S" ratings on all the missions. It took about six hours. And all I got was this ridiculous (OK, more like *hysterical*) flying pig for my efforts.

Granted, I didn't master the Time Attack mode—but after conquering all the missions, I had no desire to do so. I didn't feel like I'd earn a reward commensurate with my efforts. In short, I lost interest.

And that's probably the biggest issue with City Crisis: **It's compelling enough at the beginning, but the novelty wears off in a hurry**, and there's little underneath. It's a good time while it lasts—but it only lasts long enough for a rental.

Final Score ● ● ●

Joe Rybicki

EVERYONE
Players: 1
Memory Card: 224 KB

Extermination

Extermination

Publisher Deep Space
Developer Sony CEA
Web Site www.scea.com

I don't want to step on any Resident Evil fans' toes, but I, myself, am pretty damn tired of survival horror—which is why **I was pleased to see the new features introduced in Extermination**. Moving your character, for example, is finally more intuitive, doing away with the RE-style "turn-and-advance" method in favor of a radical new "move-in-the-direction-you-press" scheme. Also absent are the prerendered backgrounds and static camera angles. And the introduction of additional actions (like climbing, jumping and hand-over-hand movement, monkey bar-style) is a welcome improvement.

I wish—oh, how I wish—that I could be as enthusiastic about the actual game as I am about its résumé. Alas, it is not to be.

Let's start with the story. The **horribly contrived, cliché, overwrought, overdone story**. (Scientists have developed a mutating bacteria, and—surprise!—it's escaped and is currently turning its laboratory home into a postapocalyptic wildlife preserve.) I haven't seen such a hackneyed plot since *Mission to Mars*, and I haven't seen such horrible writing since *Wing Commander*. And I'm not talking about the kind of loveable mistranslation that made Resident Evil such a hoot—this is just out and out *bad*. And the voice acting is equally awful.

Still, this wouldn't be such a problem if the gameplay itself were exceptional, but issues of control and difficulty abound. A spotty auto-aim function makes combat far more difficult than it ought to be, resulting in far too many cheap deaths for my liking. When it takes a professional gamer (i.e., me) four days to play through four hours of game time, there's something wrong.

Oh, and did I mention the respawning enemies? Yeah, I love spending 10 minutes painstakingly clearing all forms of alien life from an enormous room...only to come back five minutes later and find all the dead things—alive! It's a treat.

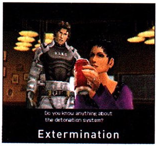
Still, **the super-sharp graphics and the high level of difficulty may lure survival-horror veterans**. Honestly, Extermination is far from a total loss. It's just that it never gets really above-average in anything other than graphics. Too bad.

Final Score ● ● ◐

Joe Rybicki

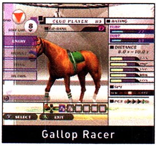
MATURE
Players: 1
Memory Card: 79 KB

Extermination



Extermination

Gallop Racer


Gallop Racer

Gallop Racer

Publisher Tecmo
Developer Tecmo
Web Site www.tecmoinc.com

Gallop Racer is not a game for everyone. Not that you couldn't have deduced that from the title, the publisher (Tecmo, of Monster Rancher fame), or the fact that it's, well, a horse-racing simulator. But let me just point it out one more time: **Gallop Racer is not a game for everyone.** The question is, is it a game for *anyone*? The answer, sadly, is not entirely clear.

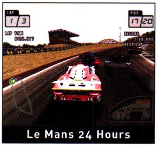
In Gallop Racer, you buy horses. Then you race the horses. After awhile, you can retire the horses, which allows you to take a boy horse and a girl horse and make a new horse. And that's pretty much it. (Well, there is a mode that lets you bet on the horses—sort of. We'll get to that in a minute.) Now, choosing your mount and selecting and executing races in such a way as to play to your steed's strengths certainly requires some practice, knowledge and finesse. But damn, **I was expecting at least *some* basic care and training in there**. That would have at least appealed to fans of Monster Rancher. But no dice.

And as for the "betting"—well, you can bet on single races, but you don't build up money beyond those races and you can't use the credits in the other parts of the game. So it's a fleeting diversion. In the end, Gallop Racer will appeal only to would-be jockeys—not trainers, or owners, or gamblers. Seems like a shame.

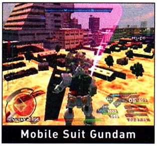
Final Score ● ●

Joe Rybicki

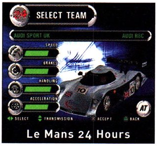
EVERYONE
Players: 1-2
Memory Card: 464 KB



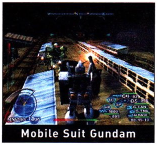
Le Mans 24 Hours



Mobile Suit Gundam



Le Mans 24 Hours



Mobile Suit Gundam

Le Mans 24 Hours

Publisher Infogrames
Developer Melbourne House
Web Site www.infogrames.com

The first iteration of Le Mans released by Infogrames, for PS one, was very disappointing indeed—we gave it a score of two and a half back in issue 34. A few months later, a Dreamcast version was released, and lauded as one of the finest racing games of all time. As far as I'm aware, the PS2 version is a failed attempt to capture that magic.

Le Mans is a love-it or hate-it experience. Very fast GT cars drive around a track, very quickly, for a *very* long time, until either everyone gets bored, or someone wins. It's an exercise in endurance, and requires an ability to race with a lot of discipline. Despite controlling some high-powered hardware, you have to fight the urge to get all tail happy and throw your McLaren F1 or Audi R8 sideways through a left-hander, as you'll just end up losing the race.

Graphically it's not going to turn many heads, and like so many racing games the sound is nowhere near as good as it should be either—especially the awful default euro-techno soundtrack that intrudes on what could be the glorious sounds of expensive machinery.

Casual GT3 fans probably won't enjoy this, as it's too "formal" in its approach. Unfortunately, **you have to be a real fan of this particular cult of motorsport** to get the most out of it and this makes it disappointing for the rest of us.

Final Score ●●◖

John Davison

Players: 1-2
Memory Card: 179 KB

Mobile Suit Gundam: Journey to Jaburo

Publisher Bandai
Developer Bandai
Web Site www.bandai.com

Just like so many other anime-based games, this is only worth checking out if you're into the source material. If you're not, stay far, far away from it. Heck, even if you are into Gundam, proceed with caution: Journey to Jaburo is a total clunker.

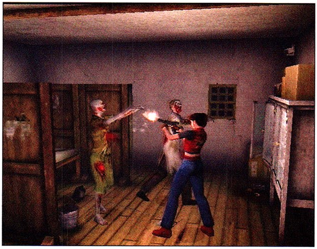
For starters, **the graphics are painful**. You will see a nice effect or two here and there, but for the most part, everything looks really choppy and cruddy. Definitely not PS2-worthy. And then comes the gameplay, which isn't any better. The controls are clunky and performing such tasks as shooting down airborne targets is next to impossible. Hand-to-hand combat is a headache as well, thanks to choppy animations and poor collision detection. **Other mech games such as Z.O.E. or Armored Core 2 just walk all over this one.**

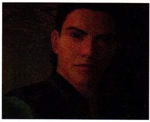
But if there's any saving grace for Journey to Jaburo, it's the nicely mixed Gundam musical tracks that accompany the action and the video sequences that are interspersed throughout. These video cutscenes will often show clips from the original Gundam movie that pertain to the game's storyline as well as new CG sequences that were designed purely for the game. And it basically comes down to this: Only check out Journey to Jaburo if you think these video sequences will hold your interest. Because the gameplay sure won't.

Final Score ●

Sam Kennedy

Players: 1
Memory Card: 103 KB





Resident Evil–Code: Veronica X

At last, the Evil resides on PS2

Publisher Capcom
Developer Capcom
Web Site www.capcom.com

You know that unpleasant noise a zombie makes as he bites repeatedly into your neck? That gooey, crunchy smack? The one that just makes you scream out, "Get the hell *off* me!"? Yeah, that one. It's good to have it back.

Yeah, yeah, I know. I'm making Resident Evil–Code: Veronica sound like something new, when Dreamcast owners have had access to it for over a year now. But like many of you who read this (I'm guessing *most* of you, in fact), I lack Sega's latest (and now, unfortunately, dying) piece of hardware, and never had the opportunity to play the game until now. And guess what, my PS2-owning friends? Not only do we now have **the greatest Resident Evil game ever** available to us, we've also got the best version of it. This is Code: Veronica *X*, after all. You know, as in "x-tra." You can read all about the cool additions in the sidebar to the right. But let's focus on the game for what it is in itself now, shall we?

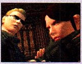
As you may already know, plot takes center stage in Code: Veronica to a greater degree than any prior Resident Evil game. In-game and (to a far lesser extent) full-motion video cutscenes occur frequently—so often, in fact, that the game features a truly cinematic feel. Yeah, it's mostly **a very *B-movie* cinematic feel**, but hey, this is a game where you go around blasting apart zombies. The occasional lousy voice acting is forgiven easily enough. (Nothing against Canadian accents, incidentally, but am I the only one who has a hard time holding a straight face through the abundance of "aboots" and "sore-y"s?)

In true Resident Evil tradition, gameplay for Code: Veronica divides itself among two characters, both of whom should ring a bell if the name "Redfield" means anything to you. The game's first half starts out on a European island, which also happens to house Umbrella, the infamous organization behind the very virus that turned Raccoon City into Zombieville, USA. Claire Redfield has ended up here after the search for her brother Chris led her to France, where Umbrella arrested her. She manages to escape her imprisonment only to find the island itself overrun by zombies, with almost all other humans having already evacuated. One of the few humans she does meet is Steve Burnside, who, despite his macho facade, harbors feelings for our heroine. Eventually, Claire and Steve find themselves up against the madman leader of Umbrella, their adventure soon leading them to the Antarctic.

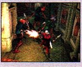
At the game's midway point (actually, the end of what would be disc 1 if you were playing on Dreamcast; we've got a single-disc DVD for PS2), Chris finds his way to Umbrella's European island to, of all reasons, find Claire. He eventually heads way south, too—but not without some major interference from his former S.T.A.R.S. boss turned resurrected evil guy, Albert Wesker.

X-tras, X-tras...Read All About 'Em

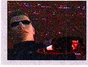
Like a special-edition DVD, Code: Veronica X comes packed with extras not in the original version on Dreamcast. Here they are.



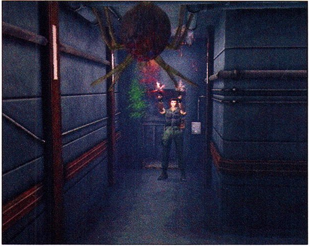
Ten minutes of new in-game cinematics offer a better understanding of Wesker and his intentions. Here, he beats Claire around. We also see a groovy fight scene with Chris.

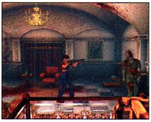


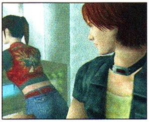
A playable demo of Resident Evil producer Shinji Mikami's next project shows us why Devil May Cry is one of this year's most eagerly anticipated games.



You can only get "Wesker's Report" externally packaged at certain retail outlets, but this 23-minute Resident Evil documentary nicely recaps the events of the previous three games.

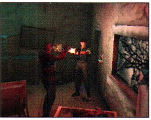






("I *despise* Chris" stands out as the game's most memorable line for me, courtesy of the villain—well, aside from Steve's "I'm sore-y.")

One of the cooler things about playing as the two Redfields in Code: Veronica has to do with the way one's game affects that of the other. Remember back in the second one, how you played as both Claire and Leon Kennedy, their adventures occurring at the same time and your actions in one affecting the other? This one sort of works like that, only it all acts as one linear story. While playing as Claire, if you fail to leave behind a powerful weapon or two for your brother, you might find yourself feeling rather screwed when you need that grenade launcher later on. At the same time, several menial tasks exist that, while ultimately inconsequential, might yield extra weapons and whatnot.



And you need all kind of weaponry to stand any chance against the zombies, spiders, killer dogs, bats, sandworms and other menacing monsters in your way. Of course, you often meet the likes of Mr. Tyrant via a quick, unexpected jump-out-atcha maneuver that **scares the bejesus out of you—just like any good Resident Evil game**. You'll also grow to hate certain monsters more than others. (Not to echo Wesker here, but I *despise* those Antarctic poisonous moths!)

For as many things as Code: Veronica does well, it also fails in the one area with which I had biggest hopes for improvement: The real-time backgrounds that replace the static prerendered ones of old **do little to rectify the series' age-old problem of not always being able to see right in front of you**. You'd think that hitting a shoulder button might yield a first-person perspective or allow you to adjust camera angles—nay on both counts. You're just as likely to get nailed from off-camera as ever. You can't even use a shoulder button to do a 180. (It's obvious this game was designed for Dreamcast, seeing as how two of them go unused.)

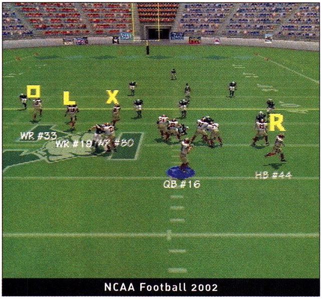
But in the end, Code: Veronica still stands **among the elite in the survival-horror genre**. But is it the *best*? Silent Hill would have to get my vote in that department, just for its sheer constant-creepiness factor. But this one's a close second. It sure has me hankering to scream at hungry zombies preying upon my neck again.

Final Score ●●●●◖

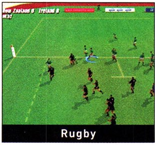
Chris Baker

MATURE M

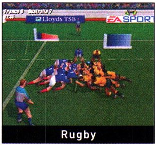
Players: 1
Memory Card: 102 KB



NCAA Football 2002



Rugby



Rugby

NCAA Football 2002

Publisher EA Sports
Developer Tiburon
Web Site www.easports.com

Odds are you've taken a look at the screens for NCAA Football 2002 and already reached a conclusion about it. "This is just a college version of Madden!" you cry. But, NCAA pigskin fans, I think it's safe to assume that that cry is one of joy. Because, let's face it, Madden is the best there is in the football genre, and there's nothing wrong with cloning its basic look and gameplay for its academic counterpart. In fact, it makes for **the best college football game ever**.

The most readily apparent feature elevating NCAA '02 above the rest shines through with the game's graphics. Sometimes I'll have the game on demo mode while I work on something else, turn around shortly after to wonder, if ever so briefly, how my cable/antenna-free TV is broadcasting a game...in July. Each of Division 1-A's 117 teams (plus 27 from 1-AA) come at you in screamingly authentic uniforms, right down to the helmet decals on schools like Ohio State, which actually get added as your players prove their worth.

Which brings me to another point: NCAA '02's **amazing attention to detail**. Aside from the impressively accurate scouting for each team (there's only, what, like 8,600 players to rate?), the virtual players seem to look as much like their real-life versions as those found in Madden 2001. That may sound like NCAA '02 is a year behind at first, but considering the fact that EA technically can't use spot-on likenesses or names (though you do have the option to enter them yourself—a huge plus for me), it's quite impressive. I could go on about other details like all the real bowl games, GPAs, the awesome Dynasty mode, Campus Cards, excellent commentary from ESPN analysts, real mascots and more, but then I'd have no room to discuss the gameplay...

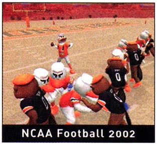
...which rocks. Though a few consistent annoyances here and there deny the game a perfect score (I had one interception all season, when I should have had like *eight*), you'll find yourself up against **AI that always stays competitive**—run up the middle with the same play a few times successfully and they're onto you for the rest of the game. Your players have good days and bad days, hot streaks and cold ones. It all just feels so *real*.

Final Score ●●●●◖

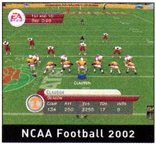
Chris Baker

EVERYONE E

Players: 1-8
Memory Card: 1897 KB



NCAA Football 2002



NCAA Football 2002

Rugby

Publisher EA Sports
Developer EA Sports
Web Site www.easports.com

Rugby. In America. Interesting. While I'm a rugby fan who has watched the game during idle times of my youth, I have to wonder if the other 38 American-born rugby fans will shell out 50 quid for this game. Regardless, it's exciting to know EA Sports is taking a chance, and bringing such a niche game stateside.

The problem is, strangely, that **this game smacks of brilliant simulation**. It's really good. But if you want to draw people in, an NFL Blitz brand of rugby might've been the smarter way to go. Otherwise, it's those 38 people I mentioned, myself, and some unlucky sucker who likes the pretty cover.

Let me say that the game is very well-done, but **the fun factor never really gets a chance to shine**. One of the main reasons: There are more buttons to press than you'd have if you were taking out $200K from an ATM. If I go through the training mode before playing, I'm fine. But if I come back the next day, I have to go through the whole rigmarole again. Which is partly because I'm forgetful, and partly because there are eight buttons to remember while an angry, charging Aussie is preparing to introduce his boot to your epiglottis.

This game fills me with empathy. Now I understand what it's like for a newcomer to fire up Madden...and start on the hardest level. Rent this first. If you like it, join the ranks.

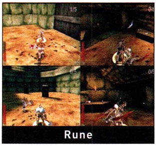
Final Score ●●●◖

Todd Zuniga

EVERYONE E

Players: 1-2
Memory Card: 296 KB

Rune



Rune

Rune: Viking Warlord

Publisher Take-Two Interactive
Developer Human Head Studios
Web Site www.take2games.com

This could have been a good game. Heck, this could have been a *great* game. But somehow Human Head Studios really botched this one.

And that's too bad, because Rune has so many things going for it: a dark, ominous atmosphere reminiscent of Soul Reaver; **over-the-top viking violence, with lots of limb-severing mayhem**; a wide array of brutal weaponry; an involving (if cliché) storyline, with fine voice-acting; some warped inside humor; and an immense world full of varied enemies and mildly challenging puzzles.

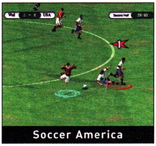
But **Rune is almost completely undone by its technical shortcomings**. The load times are unbearable. The framerate is unacceptable—with just a few enemies on screen, the game can get choppier than Martin Yan testing out a new set of Ginsu knives. The graphics are woefully subpar for a PS2 game. The sight distance is embarrassing (copious fog is used to mask this problem). The control, while solid during combat, is too clunky for the platforming sequences. And the multiplayer melees, which should have been a hoot, are destroyed by that icky framerate and awkward camera.

Despite all these issues, I still had fun playing Rune. If you can see past the problems (believe me, it won't be easy), you might enjoy it, too. Otherwise, wait for the sequel—and pray they get it right next time around.

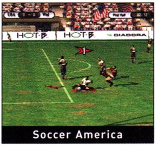
Final Score ● ● ◐

Gary Steinman

Players: 1–4
Memory Card: 118 KB



Soccer America



Soccer America

Soccer America: International Cup

Publisher Hot-B
Developer Taito
Web Site www.hotb.com

I like when games make me laugh. Even when they're not supposed to. While Soccer America doesn't make me evilly giddy the way GameDay for PS2 did, it still gets a few chuckles. The reason being that they don't have league or player licenses, meaning the names are all fake. It makes me chortle when the world's best goal scorer, Thierry Henry is denigrated to T. Capri. And England's outstanding David Beckham is now the underwhelming D. Meecham. And what about Luis Figo, Portugal's superstar? L. Vivo. It's mild amusement, but amusement nonetheless.

Why do I harp so on the nature of names? Because the rest of **the game can best be described as a nice try**. It's sponsored by Diadora America and *Soccer America Magazine*, but I'm not sure what these companies bring to the table. It's like having minor celebrity in a shoddy independent film.

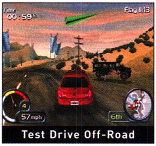
While the AI is strong (they'll screw around with the ball if they have the lead!), the gameplay is faulty. It's choppy, players sometimes glide along the pitch, and the worst part: **It's just exciting enough to put you right to sleep.** It's plain boring in a way that soccer shouldn't be.

Hot-B has a solid foundation on their hands. But without licensing, EA Sports' FIFA is still the obvious choice for footie fans.

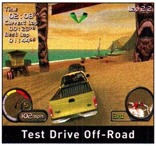
Final Score ● ●

Todd Zuniga

Players: 1-4
Memory Card: 345 KB



Test Drive Off-Road



Test Drive Off-Road

Test Drive Off-Road: Wide Open

Publisher Infogrames
Developer Angel Studios
Web Site www.infogrames.com

It's nice to see that Angel Studios is able to regurgitate much of the work it did on Smuggler's Run and put it to a different use. Those of you who ever thought "I wish there were racing game like this" while playing Rockstar's hit need wish no longer, as Wide Open is essentially just that. The environments are similarly huge and undulating, the action is satisfactorily fast, and **the overall experience, although not perfect, is certainly very enjoyable**.

I have to be honest and admit that my first hour or so with this was one of complete and utter ambivalence. Despite boasting a soundtrack that includes Metallica and two other metal bands I've never heard of, it failed to rock my world in any way whatsoever and I felt that the whole thing was about as compelling as eating rice cakes; **it gave me some racing sustenance, but no flavor**. Persistence revealed a strangely enjoyable time though. As the objectives of the races develop, you find that you have to learn the environments as you chase from checkpoint to checkpoint. Shortcuts are an integral part of the racing strategy, and there's a great sense of achievement when you discover an easy way to get from the back to the front of the pack...especially when you realize that your opponents are searching for the same edge. A decent effort.

Final Score ● ● ●

John Davison

Players: 1-2
Memory Card: 279 KB

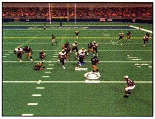
Madden NFL 2002

Love is a strong word

Publisher EA Sports
Developer Tiburon
Web Site www.easports.com

Before I begin cutting up this game into a series of digestible disco beats, I'll divulge three quotes, said by me, during my time with Madden (the game, not the man):

1. "Madden 2002 is a great game."
2. "Madden 2002 is a lot like last year, but better. I really like it."
3. "Madden 2002 is the best football game on the PS2, I mean, what else are you going to buy? GameDay?" (a roar of laughter from crowd).

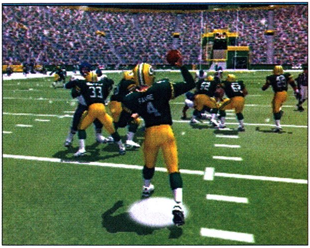


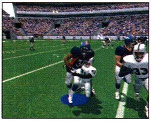
Now, for those disco beats:

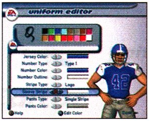
Let's "kick off" with Madden's bread and butter: presentation. **Within a sports game nothing comes close.** The subtlely brighter visuals bring you to a very happy place, a place where football is king! Onlookers and grandmothers will mistake it as being real. The player models are simply exquisite, catering to individual player sizes (a big difference from last year). Also, faces of recognizable players are implemented so the faces aren't generically stretched out and creepy looking, and their jerseys are stretched over their bodies, clinging realistically. Bubbly cheerleaders bounce around, which is pointless, but the inclusion of NFL coaches is good for a laugh because they look so realistic. **The animations will keep surprising you.** When you're clawing for an extra yard with your running back, you can see the slapping and spinning that goes into it.

As for gameplay, being on the offensive side of the ball is much different than last year. A year ago, Madden was a passing game. You could chuck the ball 50 yards and many times speedy receivers would regularly make outlandish one-handed catches. Not anymore. This incarnation demands that you know the routes your receivers are running. If you hit them in stride, you're going to be rewarded. If you hang around in the pocket, you're going to get sacked. Throwing downfield every time doesn't pay off, either. And it shouldn't. Overall, the passing game offers more "touch" than a year ago. **The analog buttons are finally being used to their best ability.** If you jam the button, you're going to throw a frickin' laser beam. Otherwise, you can feather it into the open field and let a crossing receiver run into it.

The running game is the most impressive upgrade. You bounce, spin, break tackles and charge through lightweight defenders. To bring down the game's top runners, you better bring a house of defenders for a gang tackle. This is the single biggest upgrade and it makes the game so much better than last year. Forget the glamour of presen-







tation, the trenches are where the newest Madden wins me over.

On the defensive side of the ball, **the lineman play is cleaned up tenfold**. Now you can cut through the line and get to the QB if you work hard enough. The swim is wisely complemented by a spin move. Also, the d-backs are more careful. If you want to risk an interception, you better be ready for the other team to score a TD.

The new kicking meter will draw the ire of Madden faithful since it leads to more inaccuracy. But last year kicking was too easy, too perfect. This year, missing a 30-yarder is possible if your concentration wanes. A nice touch.

As for extras, there are plenty. They've taken the outstanding Two-Minute Drill from PS one Madden, which gives it serious shelf-life in a party atmosphere.

The Franchise Mode remains awesomely deep and smartly executed. They've even added a Create-a-Team feature allowing you to put your created team (logos and all) into a franchise for an expansion draft! It's totally bitchin'. To top it off, the Madden Cards are back. Sweet.

Overall, Madden is fantastic. I love the anything-can-happen atmosphere. Fumbles are more prevalent after concussion-intending hits and a hand-off can turn into an 80-yard run. But there are big and small things that weren't addressed. Big: When switching defenders, I automatically lose a step on the man I'm trying to tackle by pressing X. To regain that lost momentum, I have to hit the speed burst: 0. **Why is speed burst different for each side of the ball?** Small: When looking at the personnel on the field, before snapping the ball, where are the defenders' names? I don't want to throw to Shawn Springs' and Charles Woodson's side of the field. So it'd be nice if I knew where they were.

Overall, I can feel the game trying to make me love it. I can feel its warm hand on the back of my neck saying, "Come on, say it. Tell me you love me." But I can't.

I am telling this game there are other fish in the sea. And so many of these fish are die-hard Madden fans who will play and love this game and say, "Todd's a big idiot! He let this slip through his hands!"

And they'll be partially right, because Madden is such a fantastic game. But it doesn't pull my heartstrings the way I'd like.

Final Score ●●●●◖

Todd Zuniga

EVERYONE E **Players: 1-4 Memory Card: 1897 KB**

WarJetz

Publisher 3DO
Developer 3DO
Web Site www.3do.com

I am in the enviable position this month of reviewing both the PS2 *and* PS one versions of this game. It's like Christmas every day in my office, I can tell you. Ultimately it was quite a confusing experience actually, as people would constantly drift by my office and ask, "Is that the PS one or PS2 version?" Aha. OK then. Without wasting more words on the visuals, **I think that gives you a pretty good idea of how, um, "super" it looks.**

Essentially it's 3DO's previous "World Destruction League" effort, Thunder Tanks, wearing a different shirt...with a jet plane on it.

Gameplay is pretty straightforward, and as a one-player game it isn't going to occupy too much of your time—you can blast through every level in just a few hours and open up all the planes. While doing this you also learn to skip through the excruciating "ambience" of the WWF-style "presentation" which is so awful I have to wonder whether the intention is to be ironic or not. I guess it's forgivable, but **the pathetic stabs at humor are frightful.**

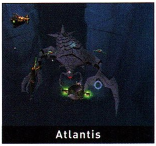
The purpose of the game becomes clear in multiplayer mode, and although seriously let down by the shocking graphics, it is actually quite fun, in a sort of mindless, old-school shooter kind of way.

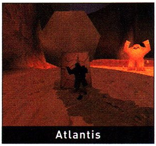
It's not worth the asking price, that's for sure. But it's definitely worth renting for a few hours of fun.

Final Score ●●◖

John Davison

TEEN T **Players: 1-2 Memory Card: 1 MB**





Atlantis: The Lost Empire

Publisher SCEA
Developer Eurocom
Web Site www.agetec.com

Just as they did with The Emperor's New Groove a few months back, Sony has once again crafted a well-polished game that will certainly please fans of the movie original. Through the use of movie cinemas as well as in-game plot sequences, **Atlantis perfectly integrates the movie's great storyline into its action-platforming adventure.**

Most of the gameplay found in Atlantis revolves around searching for items and solving puzzles, but the game does a fine job of mixing things up by also throwing in some minigames and shooter levels. And these aren't just there for variety's sake—they actually follow the movie's plot. Atlantis also lets you call upon five other characters from the movie, each with his/her own skills, for completing certain tasks that you are faced with. A nice touch.

All of the tasks and options are accomplished with easy-to-understand menus and explanations (making it perfect for those a little younger in age). Overall, the game is **a tad on the easy side**, but there are a few spots that can be surprisingly tricky. Nothing too crazy, though.

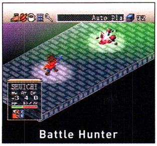
The only main complaints I had were that the camera can get annoying at times and that it was often hard to battle against enemies. But with an otherwise quality package, these can be easily forgiven.

Final Score ●●●●

Sam Kennedy

EVERYONE E **Players: 1 Memory Card: 1 block**

Move
80
GARU
JOEPH
C-BAKE
ZUNIGA1
Battle Hunter



Battle Hunter

Publisher Agetec
Developer Success
Web Site www.a1games.com

I was having trouble sleeping this month, but after suffering through a thuddingly dull evening playing this $10 "RPG," I dozed right off. With its **dreary levels, tedious gameplay and awkward setup**, Battle Hunter is a real snoozer—the kind of game that causes the eyes to glaze over while the brain desperately searches for *any* random thought that's more amusing than this silliness.

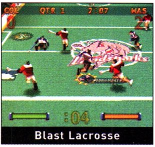
Set in the near future, Battle Hunter has you trawling for treasures in exchange for cash (which is about as deep as the story goes). You'll trudge through flat wastelands seeking out the right item, then race to the exit with the booty in hand. Now and then, you'll end up in a bland battle with a monster or another Hunter. The problem is, the gameplay is based around rolls of the dice and a random selection of cards, making movement and battle almost completely random in their outcomes, eliminating just about any strategy. But most of all, **it's just dull, dull, boring and, well, dull.**

The multiplayer mode is just as drab. Three minutes into a game with my coworkers, I had to slap Todd's hand to stop him from yanking out his controller. Five minutes later, the rest of the gang, en masse, jerked their joypads from my system and bolted from my desk, such was their revulsion. My poor multitap still hasn't recovered.

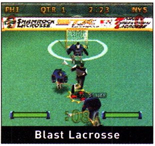
Final Score ●◖

Gary Steinman

EVERYONE E **Players: 1-4 Memory Card: 1 block**



Blast Lacrosse



Blast Lacrosse

Blast Lacrosse

Publisher Acclaim Sports
Developer Sandbox Studios
Web Site www.acclaimsports.com

Who doesn't love lacrosse? Probably the 16 billion Americans who have never seen it played before. And half of those people are apt to get a puzzled look when the word is said. Lacrosse: Is it a French pastry or a type of lasagna? Anyhow, I tend to think these same people, once learning that it's not a tasty morsel, would love it, given the chance.

Which brings me, a knowing lacrosse fan, to what is, ladies and gentlemen, the world's first lacrosse game. **It is, without a doubt, one of the ugliest games I've ever seen.** It is a sort of clingy troglodyte you don't want to run into at a social gathering. **But, looks aside, the game is quite a bit of fun.** And that's enough reason to suggest giving it a shot.

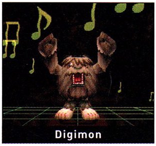
The game is a frantic fracas of back and forth. It's basically five-on-five arcade-hockey with scoops instead of sticks. The action is violent and unlike anything truly lacrosse. Which is good, since it's the first of its kind.

Besides the graphics, the framerate takes a second to get used to. And the Season mode is almost laughable. There are no trades, stats or standings. Nothing that would justify the use of the word "season," actually. But the game is fun enough that even this can be overlooked.

It's a prime rental, but people suffering from even the mildest epilepsy should look for something with a healthier framerate.

Final Score ●●◐
Todd Zuniga

E **Players: 1-2**
Memory Card: 3 blocks



Digimon

Digimon

Digimon Digital Card Battle

Publisher Bandai
Developer Bandai
Web Site www.bandai.com

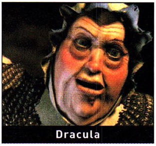
This review is not for those Digimon devotees out there. Why? Judging from the sales success of the past two utterly horrible Digimon World games, our scores scarcely matter to the legion of frothing Digi-fans. So instead, this is for the handful of virtual card-battle fans (all 17 of you), along with those of you who are just, well, curious.

Here's the good news: This is actually a decent game. **The battle system is deep and unique**—the Digivolve aspect is an especially cool way to mutate cards into more powerful forms. The range of attack options and countermeasures adds a lot of strategy to the fights. The solid enemy AI makes the matches challenging without being too tough. And with 300 different cards you can acquire, the game really lets you build several fully customized decks.

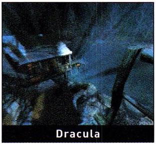
Card Battle falls short in the presentation, though. The battle screens are quite messy, leading to some confusion early on. Even worse, **the card setup screens are unorganized and difficult to navigate**, making it a real hassle to edit your decks—an essential part of the game. Also, while the 3D battle scenes might be neat for Digimon fans, the graphics are blocky and dated. Not a big deal, though, since you can switch off the battle animations, which tend to slow the pace of the game anyway.

Final Score ●●●
Gary Steinman

T **Players: 1-2**
Memory Card: 2 blocks



Dracula



Dracula

Dracula: The Resurrection

Publisher DreamCatcher
Developer Visual Impact
Web Site dreamcatchergames.com

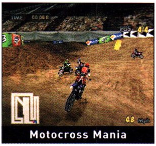
And you thought the Myst-style point-and-click adventure was dead. Granted, it's been three and a half years since Riven, but DreamCatcher has finally come along to fill that void (c'mon, you know you've felt it!) with Dracula: The Resurrection.

Judging Resurrection strictly on its gameplay, it's easy to see why similar games are a rarity. As you walk about from screen to screen with the ability to peruse all 360 degrees of your surroundings, you're basically always looking either for some sort of a tool or a place to use a tool you may have collected. What makes things downright frustrating, though, **is that it's often hard to see items** to pick up and/or use them on. Even with a FAQ in hand, it was *still* tough finding things at times.

In other ways, however, Resurrection is hard to beat. While the plot (in which Mina feels uncontrollably drawn back to the resurrected vampire's castle seven years after Bram Stoker's *Dracula*) is actually quite thin, I still felt compelled to keep playing and see what happened next. The graphics also impressed me: The environments offer tons of atmosphere (especially with the 360-degree viewing ability and ambient sounds), and **the many FMVs are some of the best looking, best acted and best directed that I've seen on PS one**. All of Resurrection's pluses make it worth a look for Drac fans.

Final Score ●●◐
Chris Baker

M **Players: 1**
Memory Card: 1 block



Motocross Mania

Motocross Mania

Motocross Mania

Publisher Take 2 Interactive
Developer Deibus Studios
Web Site www.take2games.com

Having never actually had the pleasure of playing Rainbow Studios' (ATV Off-road Fury) highly acclaimed PC motocross series, I was momentarily excited to learn that Take 2 was porting it to PS one. But then it hit me—the name of this budget title is Motocross Mania, not Motocross Madness. It wouldn't take long to learn that the difference is far greater than a few different letters.

Not that I didn't want to give Mania a chance. I wasn't expecting a fully licensed soundtrack or even real dirt-bikers (and I most certainly didn't get either—unless there're some new dudes with names like Platy, Chewie and Cow-Boy tearing up the tracks), but good gameplay is all that really matters, right? Too bad that's absent as well.

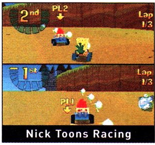
To put it bluntly, Motocross Mania is **by far the worst motocross game I've played**. It may even be the worst racing experience I've ever had. It's that bad. Name something that can go wrong and this game has it: bad physics, poor control, stupid AI, plain graphics, an abhorrent framerate that gives you a headache by the end of your first race—they're all here! **It even lacks such basic racing features as the power slide.**

Mainly, though, all of Mania's problems add up to make it lack any sort of *fun*. Pick up a used Championship Motocross if you're hankering for some cheap motocross action.

Final Score ●
Chris Baker

E **Players: 1-2**
Memory Card: 1 block

Nick Toons Racing



Nick Toons Racing

Nick Toons Racing

Publisher Infogrames
Developer Creations
Web Site www.us.infogrames.com

Don't expect any new additions to the kart-racing genre with Nick Toons Racing. While it does feature a few weapons I have yet to see in such a game (a blinding light or a darkening box over your head, for example), it's still **the typical race-cutely-with-cute-characters setup you've seen for years**. However, it's hard to deny this ragtag bunch of Nickelodeon cartoon characters, including some Rugrats, CatDog, SpongeBob, Stimpy (joy!) and more. Some delightfully colorful tracks grace the game, too.

Final Score ●●●
Chris Baker

E **Players: 1-2**
Memory Card: 1 block

Roswell Conspiracies: Aliens, Myths & Legends

Publisher Red Storm
Developer Red Lemon
Web Site www.redstorm.com

Here's a conspiracy for ya: Who managed to steal the gameplay from this wholly adequate-looking game engine? Seriously, seldom have I been so pleasantly surprised by the graphics of a game, and consequently so horribly disappointed once I actually began to play.

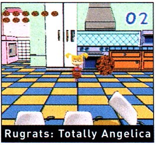
The look of Roswell Conspiracies is pretty interesting. It's not quite cel-shaded, but **it does undeniably have the style of a cartoon**. There's a nice use of light and shadow, some clean, clear textures, and some interesting-looking characters.

And then the game begins—and not long after that, the game ends, as you throw down your controller in

Roswell Conspiracies

Shooter: Space Shot

WarJetz


Rugrats: Totally Angelica

Shooter: Space Shot

WarJetz

disgust. **Controls are stiff and sluggish, a perfect match for the stiff, sluggish animations.** Bringing up a weapon seems to take an entire second, and actually firing it takes almost as long. Perhaps it wouldn't be much of a problem if there weren't plenty of enemies attacking you from off-screen. What a blast.

Level design is so simplistic and illogical as to seem almost childish. Picture the maze area of Adventure for the Atari 2600 and you have some idea what I'm talking about.

I'd like to see this graphics engine put to better use—but sadly, the graphics are the only thing worthwhile here.

Final Score ●

Joe Rybicki

TEEN T
Players: 1
Memory Card: 1 block

Rugrats: Totally Angelica

Publisher THQ
Developer Art Inc.
Web Site www.thq.com

Young girls are the target audience here; the game consists of collecting pieces of clothing for Angelica's fashion show through a series of mini-games. Though the games proved somewhat challenging for our 5-year-old colleague, with time she was able to succeed in them—and a lot of time it was; **she didn't want to put the game down!** Absolutely nothing here for the older crowd, but preschool girls—especially Rugrats fans—should have a blast.

Final Score ●●●◖

Bob and Kelsey Conlon

EVERYONE E
Players: 1
Memory Card: 1 block

Shooter: Space Shot

Publisher Agetec/A1
Developer D3 Publisher
Web Site www.agetec.com

I must say, Agetec is right on the ball for picking up this Japanese shooter gem for release under their budget $10 line of games, but come on, could they at least show a *little* bit of interest in quality control? I mean, **it seems no one even bothered to make sure that the text in the game made any sense**. It's filled with all sorts of mistakes and just screams "Japanese guy with basic English skills tried his best to translate this sucker in as little time as possible." (See this month's PS page for some examples.) Well, Hiroshi had better get his ass back to night school, because this is just embarrassing. Even "Agetec" was misspelled in the game's credits.

It's annoying, because **if Agetec had polished this baby up, Space Shot would have been a really stellar budget shooter**—perhaps even worthy of a great score. But as it stands, the game is an example of a company making the $10 price point an excuse for carelessness. And therefore, it loses points in my book.

But shooter fans would be wise to still check the game out. Playing along the lines of your typical R-Type or Thunder Force, Space Shot definitely has some good gameplay and strategy. And while it does look a tad dated and it suffers from not enough enemy variety and a short length, for 10 bucks you really can't complain. Well, except about the translation.

Final Score ●●●◖

Sam Kennedy

EVERYONE E
Players: 1
Memory Card: 1 block

WarJetz

Publisher 3DO
Developer 3DO
Web Site www.3DO.com

"Is that the PS one version or the PS2 version?" Here we go again. Check out the PS2 review this issue as well, even if you're only going to play the PS one game, as both are essentially identical. The differences? The graphics here are even worse, if that's at all possible, and there are some control issues that mean **the analog stick is more sensitive than a particularly sensitive thing on a very sensitive day, after something happened to make it feel particularly sensitive.**

All my comments about the PS2 version's nauseating WWF-style presentation stand here too, only now the quality of the CG is a bit crappier.

As with the PS2 game, single-player missions are fairly easy to blast through (even those flagged as being "hard"), and won't keep you occupied for longer than a few hours. There are 28 different missions in all, but not many of them really take all that long to get through—if you're a vaguely competent gamer you shouldn't have any trouble here. They're not particularly imaginative either; "blow up all the stuff" or "collect all the other stuff" is about as complex as it gets.

Multiplayer modes are what you'd expect, but it has to be said that the visuals completely ruin the experience, rendering it unplayable.

As with the PS2 game, don't buy...just rent it.

Final Score ●●

John Davison

TEEN T
Players: 1-2
Memory Card: 1 block

PS2 Review Archive

Game names in green indicate a Greatest Hits title. Ratings in red indicate a five-disc score.

Game	Publisher	Score	Issue
4x4 EVO	GOD Games	●●●●	44
The Adventures of Cookie & Cream	Agetec	●●●◖	44
Aqua Aqua	3DO	●●	42
All-Star Baseball 2002	Acclaim	●●●◖	45
Armored Core 2	Agetec	●●●	39
Army Men Air Attack	3DO	●●●◖	44
Army Men: Green Rogue	3DO	●●	45
Army Men: Sarge's Heroes 2	3DO	●●◖	45
ATV Offroad Fury	Sony CEA	●●●●	42
Bloody Roar 3	Activision	●●●◖	47
The Bouncer	Square EA	●●●	42
CART Fury	Midway	●	47
Cool Boarders 2001	Sony CEA	●●●●	46
Crazy Taxi	Acclaim	●●●●	46
Dark Cloud	Sony CEA	●●●●◖	46
Dead or Alive 2: Hardcore	Tecmo	●●●●◖	39
Disney's Donald Duck: Goin' Quackers	Ubi Soft	●●●◖	42
Driving Emotion Type-S	Square EA	●●◖	41
Dynasty Warriors 2	Koei	●●●●	38
Escape From Monkey Island	LucasArts	●●●●●	46
Eternal Ring	Agetec	●●	38
ESPN International Track & Field	Konami	●●●	39
ESPN MLS ExtraTime	Konami	●●	44
ESPN NBA 2Night	Konami	●●	42
ESPN National Hockey Night	Konami	●◖	45
ESPN Winter X Games Snowboarding	Konami	●●●	41
Evergrace	Agetec	●●	39
F1 Championship	Ubi Soft	●●●●	43
F1 Championship Season 2000	EA Sports	●●◖	41
Fantavision	Sony CEA	●●●●	40
FIFA 2001 Major League Soccer	EA Sports	●●●●◖	39
Fur Fighters: Viggo's Revenge	Acclaim	●●●	46
Gauntlet: Dark Legacy	Midway	●●●◖	46
Gradius III and IV	Konami	●●◖	39
Gran Turismo 3: A-spec	SCEA	●●●●●	46
Gungriffon Blaze	Working Designs	●●●◖	39
Heroes of Might and Magic: Quest for the DragonBone Staff	3DO	●●◖	46
High Heat MLB 2002	3DO	●●●●	44
Kengo: Master of Bushido	Crave	●●●	42
Kessen	EA Games	●●●	39
Klonoa 2: Lunatea's Veil	EA Games	●●●●◖	47
Knockout Kings 2001	EA Sports	●●●●	42
Madden NFL 2001	EA Sports	●●●●◖	38
MDK2 Armageddon	Interplay	●●●◖	45
Midnight Club	Rockstar	●●●●	39
Moto GP	Namco	●●●●	39
Motor Mayhem	Infogrames	●●●	47
MTV Music Generator 2	Codemasters	●●●	46
MX 2002 featuring Ricky Carmichael	THQ	●●●●	47
NASCAR 2001	EA Sports	●●◖	40
NASCAR Heat	Infogrames	●●●●	47
NBA Hoopz	Midway	●●●	44
NBA Live 2001	EA Sports	●●●	42
NBA ShootOut 2001	Sony CEA	●●◖	44
NBA Street	EA Big	●●●●●	47
NCAA Final Four 2001	Sony CEA	●	41
NCAA GameBreaker 2001	Sony CEA	●◖	41
NFL GameDay 2001	Sony CEA	●	40
NHL FaceOff 2001	989 Sports	●●●◖	43
NHL 2001	EA Sports	●●●●	38
Oni	Rockstar	●◖	43
Onimusha: Warlords	Capcom	●●●●	43
Orphen: Scion of Sorcery	Activision	●●●	39
Q-Ball Billiards Master	Take 2	●●●◖	40
Quake III Revolution	EA Games	●●●●◖	44
Rayman 2 Revolution	Ubi Soft	●●●●●	41
RC Revenge Pro	Acclaim	●●◖	41
Ready 2 Rumble Boxing Round 2	Midway	●●●●	40
Real Pool	Infogrames	●●●◖	40
Red Faction	THQ	●●●●●	46
Ridge Racer V	Namco	●●●●◖	38
Ring of Red	Konami	●●●●	43
Rumble Racing	EA Games	●●●●◖	45
Shadow of Destiny	Konami	●●●◖	43
Silent Scope	Konami	●●●	39
Silpheed: The Lost Planet	Working Designs	●●◖	40
Sky Odyssey	Activision	●●●	40
Smuggler's Run	Rockstar	●●●●◖	39
SSX	EA Sports BIG	●●●●●	38
Star Wars: Episode I—Super Bombad Racing	LucasArts	●●	45
Star Wars: Starfighter	LucasArts	●●●●◖	43
Street Fighter EX 3	Conspiracy	●●●◖	47
Stretch Panic	Capcom	●●●◖	39
Summoner	THQ	●●●	39
Super Bust-A-Move	Acclaim	●●●	41
Surfing H3O	Rockstar	●●	40
Swing Away Golf	EA Games	●●●	38
Tekken Tag Tournament	Namco	●●●●◖	39
Theme Park Roller Coaster	Bullfrog	●●●●	41
Tiger Woods PGA Tour	EA Sports	●●●	44
TimeSplitters	Eidos Int.	●●●●●	39
Tokyo Xtreme Racer Zero	Crave	●●◖	45

PS2 Review Archive (cont.)

Game names in green indicate a Greatest Hits title. Ratings in red indicate a five-disc score.

Game	Publisher	Score	Issue
Top Gear Dare Devil	Kemco	●●●◖	41
Triple Play Baseball	EA Sports	●●	45
Twisted Metal: Black	SCEA	●●●●●	47
Unison	Tecmo	●●●◖	44
Unreal Tournament	Infogrames	●●◖	40
Warriors of Might & Magic	3DO	●●◖	44
Wild Wild Racing	Interplay	●●●	39
Winback	Koei	●●●●	43
World Destruction League: Thunder Tanks	3DO	●●●	42
X Squad	EA Games	●●●◖	38
Z.O.E: Zone of the Enders	Konami	●●●●◖	44

PS one Review Archive

Game	Publisher	Score	Issue
007 Racing	EA Games	●●●	41
3Xtreme	989 Studios	●	21
40 Winks	GT Interactive	●●●●	28
102 Dalmatians: Puppies to the Rescue	Eidos	●●●◖	41
A Bug's Life	Sony CEA	●●	15
Ace Combat 2	Namco	●●●●●	1
Ace Combat 3: Electrosphere	Namco	●●●	31
Action Bass	Take Two.	●●	37
Action Man: Operation Extreme	Hasbro	●●●	41
Akuji the Heartless	Crystal Dynamics	●●●	18
Aladdin in Nasira's Revenge	Sony CEA	●●	45
Alexi Lalas International Soccer	Rockstar	●	23
Alone in the Dark: The New Nightmare	Infogrames	●●●●	47
Alien Resurrection	Fox Interactive	●●●	38
Alundra	Working Designs	●●●●◖	4
Alundra 2	Activision	●●●	32
Animaniacs Ten Pin Alley	ASC	●●●	17
Animorphs: Shattered Reality	Infogrames	●●◖	37
Ape Escape	Sony CEA	●●●●●	22
Apocalypse	Activision	●●●	16
Arcade Party Pak	Midway	●●●◖	28
Arcade's Greatest Hits: Atari Collection 2	Midway	●●◖	7
Arcade's Greatest Hits: Midway Collection 2	Midway	●●	4
Armored Core	Sony CEA	●●●◖	3
Armored Core: Master of Arena	Agetec	●●	31
Armorines: Project S.W.A.R.M.	Acclaim	◖	35
Army Men 3D	3DO	●●●	20
Army Men Air Attack 2	3DO	●●●◖	39
Army Men: Green Rogue	3DO	●◖	47
Army Men: Sarge's Heroes	3DO	●●	32
Army Men: Sarge's Heroes 2	3DO	●●◖	40
Army Men: World War	3DO	●◖	34
Army Men World War: Final Front	3DO	●◖	45
Army Men World War: Land, Sea, Air	3DO	●◖	39
Arthur! Ready to Race	The Learning Co.	●	42
Assault	Midway	●●●	15
Asteroids	Activision	●●●◖	16
ATV: Quad Power Racing	Acclaim	●	39
Auto Destruct	Electronic Arts	●●●	6
Azure Dreams	Konami	●●●	10
Backstreet Billiards	Ascii	●●●◖	15
Ball Breakers	Take 2	●●●◖	36
Ballistic	Infogrames	●●●●	27
Baseball 2000	Interplay	●●	21
Bass Landing	Agetec	●●●◖	26
Bass Rise	Bandai	●●●	28
Batman: Gotham City Racer	Ubi Soft Games	●◖	46
Batman & Robin	Acclaim	●	13
Batman Beyond: Return of the Joker	Ubi Soft	◖	39
Battletanx: Global Assault	3DO	●◖	31
Beast Wars	Hasbro Int.	●◖	5
Big Air	Accolade	●◖	20
Big Ol' Bass 2	Konami	●●◖	45
Billiards	Agetec	●●◖	45
Bio F.R.E.A.K.S.	Midway	●●	10
Black Bass with Blue Marlin	Hot-B	●●	29
Blade	Activision	●●◖	41
Blast Radius	Psygnosis	●●●◖	19
Blaster Master: Blasting Again	Sunsoft	●●●	38
Blasto	Sony CEA	●●●◖	8
Bloody Roar	Sony CEA	●●●◖	6
Bloody Roar 2	Sony CEA	●●●●	21
Blues Big Musical	THQ	●●●	46
Board Game: Top Shop	Agetec/A1 Games	●●●●	45
Bomberman Fantasy Race	Atlus	●●◖	19
Bomberman Party Edition	Vatical	●●◖	38
Bomberman World	Atlus	●●◖	13
The Bombing Islands	Kemco	●●◖	47
Boombots	SouthPeak	●●◖	27
Bottom of the 9th '97	Konami	●●●◖	1
Bowling	Agetec	●●	43
Boxing	Agetec	●●●	45
Brave Fencer Musashi	Square EA	●●●●	15
Bravo Air Race	THQ	●●●	1
Breakout	Hasbro Int.	●●	39
Breath of Fire III	Capcom	●●●◖	9
Breath of Fire IV	Capcom	●●●◖	40
Brigandine	Atlus	●●●◖	15
Broken Sword	THQ	●●●●	5
Broken Sword II	Crave	●●●◖	27
Brunswick Circuit Pro Bowling	THQ	●●●◖	13
Brunswick Circuit Pro Bowling 2	THQ	●●●●	31
Bug Riders	GT Interactive	●●	3
Bugs Bunny Lost In Time	Infogrames	●●●◖	23
Bugs Bunny & Taz: Time Busters	Infogrames	●●●	41
Builder's Block	Jaleco	●●●◖	35
Burstrick Wake Boarding	Natsume	●◖	45
Bushido Blade 2	Square EA	●●●◖	14
Bust A Groove	989 Studios	●●●●	16
Bust A Groove 2	Enix	●●●	36
Bust-A-Move 99	Acclaim	●●	19
Bust-A-Move 4	Natsume	●●●●	17
Buzz Lightyear of Star Command	Activision	●●◖	39
C: The Contra Adventure	Konami	●◖	12
Caesar's Palace II	Interplay	●●	15
Caesar's Palace 2000	Interplay	◖	41
Cardinal SYN	Sony CEA	●●●	9
CART World Series	Sony CEA	●●●◖	3
Casper: Friends Around the World	Sound Source	●◖	41
Castlevania: SotN	Konami	●●●●●	2
Castrol Honda Superbike	Electronic Arts	●●	21
Centipede	Hasbro Int.	●	22
Championship Bass	EA Sports	●●●●	33
Championship Motocross Featuring Ricky Carmichael	THQ	●●●◖	25
Championship Motocross 2001 Featuring Ricky Carmichael	THQ	●●●	41
Championship Surfer	Mattel Int.	●●●	41
Chessmaster II	Mindscape	●●●◖	23
Chicken Run	Eidos	●●●	41
Chocobo Racing	Square EA	●●●	23
Chocobo's Dungeon 2	Square EA	●●◖	29
Chrono Cross	Square EA	●●●●●	36
Circuit Breakers	Mindscape	●●●	12
Civilization II	Activision	●●●●◖	18
Clock Tower	Ascii	●●●	2
Clock Tower II: The Struggle Within	Agetec	●●◖	28
Colin McRae Rally	Sony CEA	●●●●	30
Colin McRae Rally 2	Codemasters	●●●●●	40
Colony Wars	Psygnosis	●●●●●	4
Colony Wars: Red Sun	Psygnosis	●●●●◖	31
Colony Wars: Vengeance	Psygnosis	●●●◖	14
Command & Conquer: Red Alert	Virgin	●●●◖	4
Contender	Sony CEA	●●●●	17
Contender 2	Bam!	●	41
Cool Boarders 2	Sony CEA	●●●●	3
Cool Boarders 3	989 Studios	●●●	14
Cool Boarders 4	989 Studios	●●●	27
Cool Boarders 2001	Sony CEA	●	39
Countdown Vampires	Bandai	●◖	32
Covert Ops: Nuclear Dawn	Activision	●●◖	34
Crash Bandicoot 2	Sony CEA	●●●●	3
Crash Bandicoot: WARPED	Sony CEA	●●●●●	15
Crash Bash	SCEA/Universal	●●◖	39
Crime Killer	Interplay	●●●	12
Critical Depth	GT Interactive	●●●	3
Croc	Fox Interactive	●●●●	1
Croc 2	Fox Interactive	●●◖	22
Crusaders of Might & Magic	3DO	●●●	30
CTR: Crash Team Racing	Sony CEA	●●●●●	26
CyberTiger	EA Sports	●●●●	27
Dance Dance Revolution	Konami	●●●●	42
Danger Girl	THQ	●●◖	39
Dark Omen	Electronic Arts	●●	9
DarkStalkers	Capcom	●●●●	16
Darkstone	Take 2 Int.	●●●◖	43
Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX	Acclaim Max	●●●◖	38
Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX: Maximum Remix	Acclaim Max	●●◖	47
Dead in the Water	ASC	●●◖	17
Dead or Alive	Tecmo	●●●●◖	8
Deathtrap Dungeon	Eidos	●●◖	9
Deception III: Dark Delusion	Tecmo	●●●●	31
Demolition Racer	Infogrames	●●●●	26
Destrega	Koei	●●●●	16
Destruction Derby Raw	Midway	●●●●	39
Devil Dice	THQ	●●●◖	13
Diablo	Electronic Arts	●●●●	8
Die Hard Trilogy: Viva Las Vegas	Fox Interactive	●●	31
Digimon World	Bandai	●◖	36
Digimon World 2	Bandai	●●	46
Dino Crisis	Capcom	●●●●	25
Dino Crisis 2	Capcom	●●●●◖	38
Disney's Dinosaur	Ubi Soft	●◖	36
Donald Duck: Goin' Quackers	Ubi Soft	●●●	39
Downhill Mountain Bike Racing	Activision	●●◖	27
Dragon Tales: Dragon Seek	NewKidCo	●◖	45
Dragon Valor	Namco	●●●	38
DragonBall GT	Bandai	●●	4
Dragonseeds	Jaleco	●●	15
Driver	GT Interactive	●●●●	24
Driver 2	Infogrames	●●●●	40
Ducati World Championship Racing	Acclaim	●●◖	41
Duke Nukem: Land of the Babes	Infogrames	●●◖	40
Duke Nukem: Time to Kill	GT Interactive	●●●◖	14
Duke Nukem: Total Meltdown	GT Interactive	●●●	5
Dukes of Hazzard	SouthPeak	●◖	29
Dukes of Hazzard II: Daisy Dukes it Out	SouthPeak	●●	41
Dune 2000	Electronic Arts	●◖	27
EA Sports Supercross	EA Sports	●●●◖	41
Eagle One: Harrier Attack	Infogrames	●●●	32
Echo Night	Agetec	●●●	23
ECW Anarchy Rulz	Acclaim	●	38
ECW Hardcore Revolution	Acclaim	●◖	30
Ehrgeiz	Square EA	●●●◖	21
Einhänder	Sony CEA	●●●●	8
Elemental Gearbolt	Working Designs	●●●●	11
Eliminator	Psygnosis	●◖	20
The Emperor's New Groove	SCEA	●●●◖	40
ESPN MLS GameNight	Konami	●●●	40
Eternal Eyes	Sunsoft	●◖	38
Evil Dead: Hail to the King	THQ	●●◖	41
Evil Zone	Titus	●●●	25
Expendable	Infogrames	●◖	34
F1 2000	EA Sports	●●●◖	33
F1 Championship Season	EA Sports	●●●◖	40
F1 Racing Championship	Ubi Soft	●●◖	39
Family Feud	Hasbro Int.	●●●	39
Family Game Pack	3DO	●●◖	33
Fantastic Four	Acclaim	●●	3
Fatal Fury: Wild Ambition	SNK	●◖	30
Fear Effect	Eidos	●●●●◖	31
Fear Effect 2: Retro Helix	Eidos	●●●●◖	43
Felony 11-79	Ascii	●●●	1
FIFA 98	EA Sports	●●●◖	4
FIFA 99	EA Sports	●●●●◖	17
FIFA 2000	EA Sports	●●●●◖	27
FIFA 2001 Major League Soccer	EA Sports	●●●●◖	39
The Fifth Element	Activision	◖	15
Fighter Maker	Agetec	●●●◖	21
Fighting Force	Eidos	●●●	3
Fighting Force 2	Eidos	●●	29
Final Fantasy Anthology	Square EA	●●●●◖	26
Final Fantasy Chronicles	Sony CEA	●●●●	47
Final Fantasy Tactics	Sony CEA	●●●●	5
Final Fantasy VII	Sony CEA	●●●●●	1
Final Fantasy VIII	Square EA	●●●●●	25
Final Fantasy IX	Square EA	●●●●●	39
Fisherman's Bait	Konami	●●●◖	18
Fisherman's Bait 2: Big Ol' Bass	Konami	●●●	27
Flintstones Bedrock Bowling	SouthPeak	●	37
Ford Racing	Empire	●●◖	44
Formula 1 '98	Psygnosis	●●●●	15
Formula 1 '99	Psygnosis	●●●◖	28
Forsaken	Acclaim	●●●●	10
Fox Sports Golf '99	Fox Interactive	●●	11
Fox Sports Soccer '99	Fox Interactive	●●◖	11
Freestyle Boardin' '99	Capcom	●●◖	18
Freestyle Motocross: McGrath vs. Pastrana	Acclaim	●●◖	40
Frogger	Hasbro Int.	●●◖	4
Frogger 2: Swampy's Revenge	Hasbro Int.	●●●	38
Front Mission 3	Square EA	●●●●◖	31
Future Cop L.A.P.D.	Electronic Arts	●●●	13
G-Police	Psygnosis	●●●●◖	3
G-Police 2	Psygnosis	●●●●	25
G.Darius	THQ	●●●●	13
Galaga: Destination Earth	Hasbro Int.	●●◖	39
Galerians	Crave	●●●	33
Gallop Racer	Tecmo	●●◖	28
Gauntlet Legends	Midway	●●◖	32
Gekido	Interplay	●●●	34
Gex: Deep Cover Gecko	Eidos	●●●◖	20
Gex: Enter the Gecko	Midway	●●●◖	7
Ghost in the Shell	THQ	●●●●	4
Glover	Hasbro Int.	●●	28
Gold and Glory: The Road to El Dorado	Revolution	●●	42
Gran Turismo	Sony CEA	●●●●●	9
Gran Turismo 2	Sony CEA	●●●●●	29
Grand Theft Auto	Take 2	●●◖	10
Grand Theft Auto 2	Rockstar	●●●	27
Grand Theft Auto: London 1969	Rockstar	●●◖	22
Grand Tour Racing '98	Activision	●●●	1
Grandia	Sony CEA	●●●●◖	26
Granstream Saga	THQ	●●●	10
The Grinch	Konami/Universal	●◖	39
Grind Session	Sony CEA	●●●●	34
Grudge Warriors	Take 2	●●	34
Guardian's Crusade	Activision	●●●	19
Gundam Battle Assault	Bandai	●●●	40
HardBall '99	Accolade	●◖	15
Harvest Moon: Back to Nature	Natsume	●●●◖	40
HBO Boxing	Acclaim	●●	41
Heart of Darkness	Interplay	●●●●	13
Hello Kitty's Cube Frenzy	NewKidCo	●●◖	20
Herc's Adventures	LucasArts	●●●	2
High Heat Baseball 2000	3DO	●	22
High Heat Major League Baseball 2002	3DO	●●●●	43
Hogs of War	Infogrames	●●●●	38
Hot Shots Golf	Sony CEA	●●●●	7
Hot Shots Golf 2	Sony CEA	●●●◖	30
Hot Wheels Turbo Racing	Electronic Arts	●●◖	25
Hydro Thunder	Midway	●●	31
Incredible Crisis	Titus	●●●◖	38
Intelligent Qube	Sony CEA	●●●	2
Intellivision Classic Games	Activision	●◖	28
Int. Superstar Soccer '98	Konami	●●●●◖	11
Int. Track & Field 2000	Konami	●●●●	27
Invasion From Beyond	GT Interactive	●●	19
Iron Soldier 3	Vatical	●●●●	35
Irritating Stick	Jaleco	●●●	18
ISS Pro Evolution	Konami	●●●●◖	35
Jackie Chan Stuntmaster	Midway	●●●◖	30
Jade Cocoon	Crave	●●●◖	23
Jarrett & LaBonte Stock Car Racing	Codemasters	●●●●	38
Jeopardy!	Hasbro Int.	●●●●	17
Jeopardy! 2	Hasbro Int.	●●●●	29
Jeremy McGrath Supercross 2000	Acclaim	●◖	38
Jersey Devil	Sony CEA	●●	10
Jet Moto 2	Sony CEA	●●●◖	3
Jet Moto 3	989 Studios	●●●◖	26
Jimmy Johnson VR Football	Interplay	●●	2
Jojo's Bizarre Adventure	Capcom	●●●●◖	31
Juggernaut	Jaleco	●●	26
K-1 Grand Prix	Jaleco	●●●◖	28
K-1 Revenge	Jaleco	●●◖	18
Kagero: Deception II	Tecmo	●●●●◖	14
Kartia	Atlus	●●●●	12
Kensei Sacred Fist	Konami	●◖	17
Killer Loop	Crave	●●●	27
King of Fighters '99	Agetec	●●●●	41
KISS Pinball	Take 2	●◖	46
Klonoa	Namco	●●●●●	6
Knockout Kings	EA Sports	●●●◖	16
Knockout Kings	EA Sports	●●●●	39
Knockout Kings 2000	EA Sports	●●●●	27
Konami Arcade Classics	Konami	●●◖	23
Koudelka	Infogrames	●●●	35
Kurt Warner's Arena Football Unleashed	Midway	●●●	34
The Land Before Time: Great Valley Racing Adv.	TDK Mediactive	●●●	46
The Land Before Time: Return to the Great Valley	Sound Source	●●◖	39
Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver	Eidos	●●●●◖	25
The Legend of Dragoon	Sony CEA	●●●●◖	34
Legend of Legaia	Sony CEA	●●●●	19
Legend of Mana	Square EA	●●◖	35
Lego Island 2: The Brickster's Revenge	Lego Media	●●◖	46
Lego Rock Raiders	Lego Media	●	37
The Lion King: Simba's Mighty Adventure	Paradox	●◖	42
The Little Mermaid II	THQ	●●●●	39
Lode Runner	Natsume	●●◖	4
Looney Tunes Racing	Infogrames	●●◖	39
The Lost World: Jurassic Park	Electronic Arts	●	2
Lunar: Silver Star Story Complete	Working Designs	●●●●◖	22
Lunar 2: Eternal Blue Complete	Working Designs	●●●●	40
Madden NFL 98	EA Sports	●●●●	2
Madden NFL 99	EA Sports	●●●●◖	13
Madden NFL 2000	EA Sports	●●●●●	25
Madden NFL 2001	EA Sports	●●●●●	37
Marvel SH vs. Street Fighter	Capcom	●●●◖	18
Marvel Superheroes	Capcom	●●	2
Marvel Vs. Capcom EX	Capcom	●●◖	30
Mary-Kate and Ashley: Magical Mystery Mall	Acclaim	●●●◖	40
Mary-Kate and Ashley: Winners Circle	Acclaim	●●◖	45
Mass Destruction	ASC	●●◖	3
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX	Activision	●●●●	45
Maximum Force	Midway	●◖	2
MDK	Playmates	●●◖	3
Medal Of Honor	Electronic Arts	●●●●	27
Medal Of Honor Underground	Electronic Arts	●●●●	39
MediEvil	Sony CEA	●●●●	14
MediEvil II	Sony CEA	●●●◖	32
Mega Man Legends	Capcom	●●●●	12
Mega Man Legends 2	Capcom	●●●◖	39
Mega Man X4	Capcom	●●●	4
Mega Man X5	Capcom	●●●◖	41
Metal Gear Solid	Konami	●●●●●	14
Metal Gear Solid VR Missions	Konami	●●●●	25
Metal Slug X	Agetec	●●●●	43
Micro Machines	Midway	●●●●●	5
Micro Maniacs	Codemasters	●●●●	32
Mike Tyson Boxing	Codemasters	●●	39
The Misadventures of Tron Bonne	Capcom	●●●●	31
Miss Spider's Tea Party	Simon & Schuster	●●●	41
Mission: Impossible	Infogrames	●●	28
Missile Command	Hasbro Int.	●●●	28

Game	Publisher	Score	Issue
MK Mythologies	Midway	●●◖	3
MLB 98	Sony CEA	●●●	1
MLB 99	Sony CEA	●●●●	9
MLB 2000	989 Studios	●●●●	21
MLB 2001	989 Studios	●●●	33
MLB 2002	Sony CEA	●●	46
MLBPA Bottom of the 9th '99	Konami	●●●◖	12
Mobil 1: Rally Championship	Electronic Arts	●●●	32
Monaco Grand Prix	Ubi Soft	●●●◖	21
Monkey Hero	Take 2	●●	18
Monkey Magic	Sunsoft	●	29
Monopoly	Hasbro Int.	●●●	5
Monster Rancher 2	Tecmo	●●●●	26
Monster Rancher Battle Card: Episode II	Tecmo	●●●◖	36
Monster Rancher Hop-A-Bout	Tecmo	●●●◖	41
Monster Seed	Sunsoft	●●◖	20
Mort the Chicken	Crave	●◖	41
Mortal Kombat: Special Forces	Midway	●◖	36
Mortal Kombat 4	Midway	●●●◖	11
Moto Racer	Electronic Arts	●●●●●	3
Moto Racer 2	Electronic Arts	●●●●◖	14
Moto Racer World Tour	Infogrames	●●●●	40
Motorhead	Fox Interactive	●●●◖	14
Mr. Domino	Acclaim	●●●◖	15
Mr. Driller	Namco	●●●●	33
Ms. Pac-Man Maze Madness	Namco	●●●●	38
MTV Music Generator	Codemasters	●●●●	28
MTV Sports: Pure Ride	THQ	●●●◖	39
MTV Sports: T.J. Lavin's Ultimate BMX	THQ	●●	45
MTV Sports: Skateboarding featuring Andy MacDonald	THQ	●	39
The Mummy	Konami	●●◖	41
Muppet Monster Adventure	Midway	●●●●	39
Muppet Race Mania	Midway	●●●◖	39
N20	Fox Interactive	●●	11
Nagano Winter Olympics '98	Konami	●●	6
NASCAR 98	EA Sports	●●●●	3
NASCAR 99	Electronic Arts	●●●●	14
NASCAR 2000	EA Sports	●●●●	26
NASCAR 2001	EA Sports	●●◖	38
NASCAR Heat	Hasbro Int.	●●●◖	40
NASCAR Rumble	Electronic Arts	●●●◖	31
NBA Fastbreak '98	Midway	●●◖	4
NBA Hoopz	Midway	●●●	43
NBA In the Zone '98	Konami	●●◖	7
NBA In the Zone '99	Konami	●●●◖	19
NBA In the Zone 2000	Konami	●●◖	28
NBA Live 98	EA Sports	●●●●◖	3
NBA Live 99	EA Sports	●●●●	16
NBA Live 2000	EA Sports	●●●●◖	28
NBA Live 2001	EA Sports	●●●●	39
NBA ShootOut 98	Sony CEA	●●●◖	8
NBA ShootOut 2000	989 Studios	●●●	30
NBA ShootOut 2001	989 Studios	●●◖	39
NBA Showtime NBA on NBC	Midway	●●●	28
NBA Tonight	ESPN Digita	●●●	14
NCAA Final Four '99	989 Studios	●●●◖	18
NCAA Final Four 2000	989 Studios	●●●◖	28
NCAA Final Four 2001	Sony CEA	●●	40
NCAA Football 98	EA Sports	●●	2
NCAA Football 99	EA Sports	●●●●◖	12
NCAA Football 2000	EA Sports	●●●●	25
NCAA Football 2001	EA Sports	●●●◖	36
NCAA GameBreaker 98	Sony CEA	●●●●	4
NCAA GameBreaker 99	989 Studios	●●●●	15
NCAA GameBreaker 2000	989 Studios	●●●	25
NCAA GameBreaker 2001	Sony CEA	●●◖	37
NCAA March Madness 98	EA Sports	●●●●	7
NCAA March Madness 99	EA Sports	●●●	18
NCAA March Madness 2000	EA Sports	●●●●	29
NCAA March Madness 2001	EA Sports	●●	41
Nectaris: Military Madness	Jaleco	●●●●	17
Need for Speed III	Electronic Arts	●●●●	8
Need for Speed: High Stakes	Electronic Arts	●●●●◖	20
Need for Speed: Porsche Unleashed	Electronic Arts	●●●◖	33
Need for Speed: V-Rally	Electronic Arts	●◖	3
Need for Speed: V-Rally 2	Electronic Arts	●●●◖	28
Newman/Haas Racing	Psygnosis	●●	7
The Next Tetris	Hasbro Int.	●●●	24
NFL Blitz	Midway	●●●●●	13
NFL Blitz 2000	Midway	●●●●●	24
NFL Blitz 2001	Midway	●●●◖	38
NFL GameDay 98	Sony CEA	●●●●●	1
NFL GameDay 99	989 Studios	●●●●	13
NFL GameDay 2000	EA Sports	●●●●	25
NFL GameDay 2001	989 Sports	●●◖	37
NFL Xtreme	989 Studios	●●	11
NFL Xtreme 2	989 Studios	●◖	24
N.GEN Racing	Infogrames	●●◖	35
NHL 99	EA Sports	●●●●◖	15
NHL 2000	EA Sports	●●●●	26
NHL 2001	EA Sports	●●●●	38
NHL Blades of Steel 2000	Konami	●●	28
NHL Breakaway 98	Acclaim	●●●	2
NHL Championship 2000	Fox Interactive	●●●	27
NHL FaceOff 98	Sony CEA	●●●●●	2
NHL FaceOff 99	989 Studios	●●●●	14
NHL FaceOff 2000	989 Studios	●●●●	26
NHL FaceOff 2001	Sony CEA	●●●●◖	38
NHL Rock the Rink	Electronic Arts	●●●●	32
Nightmare Creatures	Activision	●●●◖	3
Nightmare Creatures II	Konami	●●	33
Ninja: Shadow of Darkness	Eidos	●◖	15
Nuclear Strike	Electronic Arts	●●●●◖	3
O.D.T.	Psygnosis	●◖	15
Oddworld: Abe's Exoddus	GT Interactive	●●●●◖	15
Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee	GT Interactive	●●●●	1
One	ASC	●●●●	4
Pac-Man World	Namco	●●●●◖	25
Pandemonium! 2	Midway	●●●◖	3
PaRappa the Rapper	Sony CEA	●●●●●	2
Parasite Eve	Square EA	●●●●	12
Parasite Eve II	Square EA	●●●●◖	37
Persona 2: Eternal Punishment	Atlus	●●●●	41
Peter Jacobsen's Golden Tee Golf	Infogrames	●●●◖	41
PGA Tour 98	EA Sports	●●●	3
Pitfall 3D	Activision	●●	9
Play With The Teletubbies	Knowledge Ad.	●●	36
Pocket Fighter	Capcom	●●●●	11
Point Blank	Namco	●●●◖	6
Point Blank 2	Namco	●●●◖	20
Point Blank 3	Namco	●●●◖	44
Polaris SnoCross	Vatical	●●◖	38
Pong	Hasbro Int.	●●●◖	27
Pool Hustler	Activision	●●●●	15
Populous: The Beginning	Electronic Arts	●◖	21
Porsche Challenge	Sony CEA	●●●◖	1
Power Rangers Lightspeed Rescue	THQ	●◖	40
Power Soccer 2	Psygnosis	●●●	5
Power Spike Pro Beach Volleyball	Infogrames	●●◖	41
Poy Poy	Konami	●●●	3
Pro 18 World Tour Golf	Psygnosis	●●	19
Pro Pinball: Big Race USA	Empire Int.	●●●◖	37
Pro Pinball: Fantastic Journey	Empire Int.	●●●◖	37
Pro Pinball: Timeshock!	Take 2	●	10
Psybadek	Psygnosis	●●	15
Punky Skunk	Jaleco	●●●	6
Puzzle Star Sweep	Agetec	●●◖	43
Q*bert	Hasbro Int.	●●◖	28
Quake II	Activision	●●●●	27
R-Type Delta	Agetec	●●●●◖	23
R-Types	Ascii	●●●◖	17
R4: Ridge Racer Type 4	Namco	●●●●	20
Railroad Tycoon II	Take 2	●●●	30
Rainbow Six	Red Storm	●	27
Rally Cross 2	989 Studios	●●●◖	15
Rampage	Midway	●●◖	4
Rampage 2: Universal Tour	Midway	●	21
Rampage Through Time	Midway	●◖	36
Ray Tracers	THQ	●●●	5
RayCrisis	Spaz/W.D.	●●●	38
Rayman 2: The Great Escape	Ubi Soft	●●●●	35
Razor Freestyle Scooter	Crave	●●●	41
RC de GO!	Acclaim	●●●●	40
RC Revenge	Acclaim	●●●◖	37
RC Stunt Copter	Titus	●●●●	25
Re-Volt	Acclaim	●●	26
Ready 2 Rumble	Midway	●●●◖	27
Ready 2 Rumble Boxing Round 2	Midway	●●●	40
Red Asphalt	Interplay	●◖	3
Reel Fishing	Natsume	●●●	3
Reel Fishing II	Natsume	●●	34
Resident Evil 2	Capcom	●●●●●	6
Resident Evil 2 Dual Shock	Capcom	●●●●●	13
Resident Evil 3 Nemesis	Capcom	●●●●◖	27
Resident Evil: Director's Cut	Capcom	●●●	2
Resident Evil Survivor	Capcom	●◖	38
Rhapsody: A Musical Adventure	Atlus	●●●	35
Rising Zan	Agetec	●●●●	24
Risk	Hasbro Int.	●●●●	11
Rival Schools	Capcom	●●●●	14
Riven: The Sequel to Myst	Acclaim	●●●●●	6
Road Rash 3D	Electronic Arts	●●●	11
Road Rash: Jail Break	Electronic Arts	●●	30
Rock 'Em Sock 'Em Robots	Mattel Int.	●●●	41
Rogue Trip	GT Interactive	●●●◖	14
Roll Away	Psygnosis	●●●●◖	13
Rollcage	Psygnosis	●●●◖	19
Rollcage Stage II	Psygnosis	●●●◖	31
Romance of the 3 Kingdoms VI	Koei	●●	30
RPG Maker	Agetec	●●●●◖	35
Rugrats in Paris: The Movie	THQ	●●●	41
Runabout 2	HotB	●	36
Running Wild	989 Studios	●●	14
Rushdown	Electronic Arts	●●	19
Sabrina, the Teenage Witch: A Twitch in Time!	Knowledge Adven.	◖	45
SaGa Frontier	Sony CEA	●●●◖	8
SaGa Frontier 2	Square EA	●●●◖	29
Saiyuki: Journey West	Koei	●●●◖	47
Sammy Sosa High Heat Baseball 2001	3DO	●●	32
Sammy Sosa Softball Slam	3DO	●●	33
Samurai Shodown: Warrior's Rage	SNK	●◖	36
Scrabble	Hasbro Int.	●●◖	28
Sentinel Returns	Psygnosis	●●	11
Shadow Madness	Crave	●●◖	19
Shadow Man	Acclaim	●◖	27
Shadow Master	Psygnosis	●●●●	5
Shadow Tower	Agetec	◖	28
Shanghai: True Valor	Sunsoft	●●●	20
Sheep	Empire Int.	●●●	41
Shipwreckers	Psygnosis	●●●	3
Shooter: Starfighter Sanvein	Agetec	●●	43
Silent Bomber	Bandai	●●●●	30
Silent Hill	Konami	●●●●	18
Silhouette Mirage	Working Designs	●●●◖	29
Sim Theme Park	Electronic Arts	●●◖	33
The Simpsons Wrestling	Activision	●●	45
Skullmonkeys	Electronic Arts	●●●●●	6
Sled Storm	Electronic Arts	●●●●	24
Small Soldiers	Electronic Arts	●◖	15
Smurfs	Infogrames	●●●●	29
Smurf Racer	Infogrames	●●	45
Sno-Cross Championship Racing	Crave	●◖	37
Soul of the Samurai	Konami	●◖	24
South Park	Acclaim	●◖	27
South Park Rally	Acclaim	●◖	29
South Park: Chef's Luv Shack	Acclaim	●	28
Snowboarding	Agetec	●●	43
Space Invaders	Activision	●●●	27
Spawn: The Eternal	Sony CEA	●●	4
Spec Ops	Take 2 Int.	●	34
Spec Ops: Ranger Elite	Take 2 Int.	●	46
Speed Punks	Sony CEA	●●●●◖	32
Speed Racer	Jaleco	●●	8
Speedball 2100	Empire	●●◖	40
Spider-Man	Activision	●●●●●	37
Spin Jam	Take 2 Int.	●◖	38
Sports Car GT	Electronic Arts	●●◖	21
Spyro: Year of the Dragon	Sony CEA	●●●●●	39
Spyro 2: Ripto's Rage!	Sony CEA	●●●●◖	27
Spyro the Dragon	Sony CEA	●●●●	13
Star Ocean: The 2nd Story	Sony CEA	●●●●◖	22
Star Trek: Invasion	Activision	●●●●◖	37
Star Wars: Episode I—Jedi Power Battles	LucasArts	●●◖	33
Star Wars: Episode I—The Phantom Menace	LucasArts	●●●	25
Star Wars: Masters of Teräs Käsi	LucasArts	●●●	4
Star Wars Demolition	LucasArts	●●●◖	41
Steel Reign	Sony CEA	●●●	2
Streak	GT Interactive	●●◖	15
Street Fighter Alpha 3	Capcom	●●●●●	21
Street Fighter Collection	Capcom	●●●	4
Street Fighter Collection 2	Capcom	●●●	16
Street Fighter EX Plus Alpha	Capcom	●●●●	2
Street Fighter EX2 Plus	Capcom	●●●	33
Street Sk8er	Electronic Arts	●●◖	19
Street Sk8er 2	Electronic Arts	●●●	32
Strider 2	Capcom	●●●◖	34
Striker Pro 2000	Infogrames	●●●●	33
Strikers 1945	Agetec	●●◖	44
Suikoden II	Konami	●●●●	26
Superbike 2000	EA Sports	●◖	32
SuperCross 2000	EA Sports	●◖	29
SuperCross Circuit	989 Studios	●●●◖	28
Surf Riders	Ubi Soft	●◖	35
Sydney 2000	Eidos	●●	38
Syphon Filter	989 Studios	●●●●	18
Syphon Filter 2	989 Studios	●●●◖	31
T'ai Fu	Activision	●◖	19
T.R.A.G.	Sunsoft	●●●	20
Tactics Ogre	Atlus	●●●◖	12
Tail Concerto	Atlus	●●●◖	26
Tales of Destiny	Namco	●●●●	13
Tarzan	Sony CEA	●●●◖	24
Team Buddies	Midway	●●●◖	38
Team LOSI RC Racing	Fox Interactive	●●◖	13
Tekken 3	Namco	●●●●●	9
Tenchu	Activision	●●●●	14
Tenchu 2: Birth of the Stealth Assassins	Activision	●●●	37
Tennis Arena	Ubi Soft	●●◖	4
Test Drive 4	Accolade	●●●◖	3
Test Drive 5	Accolade	●●●◖	15
Test Drive 6	Infogrames	●●●◖	27
Test Drive Le Mans	Infogrames	●●◖	34
Test Drive: Off Road 3	Infogrames	●●	26
Thousand Arms	Atlus	●●●●	26
Thrasher: Skate & Destroy	Rockstar	●●●◖	29
Threads of Fate	Square EA	●●●◖	35
Thunder Force V	Working Designs	●●●	13
Tiger Woods 99 PGA Tour Golf	EA Sports	●●●●	16
Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2001	EA Sports	●●●◖	41
Tigger's Honey Hunt	NewKid Co	●●●●	41
Time Crisis: Project Titan	Namco	●●●	45
Tiny Tank	Sony CEA	●●◖	16
Tiny Toons: The Great Beanstalk	NewKidCo	●●●●	18
TOCA 2	Activision	●●●●◖	27
Tom and Jerry in House Trap	Eidos	●●◖	41
Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six: Rogue Spear	Red Storm	●●◖	45
Tomb Raider II	Eidos	●●●●◖	4
Tomb Raider III	Eidos	●●●◖	16
Tomb Raider: Chronicles	Eidos	●●◖	41
Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation	Eidos	●●●●	29
Tomba!	Sony CEA	●●●●	11
Tomba! 2: The Evil Swine Return	Sony CEA	●●●●	29
Tomorrow Never Dies	Electronic Arts	●●●◖	28
Tonka Space Station	Hasbro	●●◖	41
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater	Activision	●●●●◖	26
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2	Activision	●●●●●	38
Toonstein: Dare to Scare	Vatical	●●◖	29
Torneko: The Last Hope	Enix	●●	40
Toy Story 2	Activision	●●●	28
Toy Story Racer	Activision	●●●	44
Transformers: Beast Wars Transmetals	Bam! Interactive	●	36
Trap Gunner	Atlus	●●◖	13
Treasures of the Deep	Namco	●●●●	1
Trick'N Snowboarder	Capcom	●◖	25
Triple Play 99	EA Sports	●●◖	9
Triple Play 2000	EA Sports	●●●●◖	20
Triple Play 2001	EA Sports	●●●●●	32
Triple Play Baseball	EA Sports	●●●●●	32
Turbo Prop Racing	Sony CEA	●●●	11
Twisted Metal III	989 Studios	●●◖	16
Twisted Metal 4	989 Studios	●●●●	28
Tyco RC: Assault With a Battery	Mattel Int.	●●	38
Ultimate 8-Ball	THQ	●●●●	22
Ultimate Fighting Championship	Crave	●●◖	40
Um Jammer Lammy	Sony CEA	●●●◖	24
The Unholy War	Eidos	●●●	14
Uprising X	3DO	●●●	17
Urban Chaos	Eidos	●●	33
Vagrant Story	Square EA	●●●◖	33
Valkyrie Profile	Enix	●●●●	36
Vampire Hunter D	Jaleco	●●	37
Vanark	Jaleco	●●●	32
Vandal Hearts II	Konami	●●●◖	27
Vanguard Bandits	Working Designs	●●◖	33
Vanishing Point	Acclaim	●●●◖	44
Vegas Games 2000	3DO	●●●◖	27
Vigilante 8	Activision	●●●●	10
Vigilante 8: Second Offense	Activision	●●●	29
VR Baseball 99	Interplay	●●●◖	11
VR Sports Powerboat Racing	Interplay	●	10
Vs.	THQ	●	3
Walt Disney's Jungle Book Rhythm n' Groove	Ubi Soft	●●●	41
Walt Disney World Quest Magical Racing Tour	Eidos	●●◖	33
WarGames: DefCon 1	MGM Interactive	●●●●	12
Warpath: Jurassic Park	Electronic Arts	●●	27
Warriors of Might and Magic	3DO	●●●	41
Warzone 2100	Eidos	●●●●	22
WCW Backstage Assault	EA Games	●●	40
WCW Mayhem	Electronic Arts	●●●◖	26
WCW Nitro	THQ	●●◖	5
WCW/nWo Thunder	THQ	●	17
Wheel of Fortune	Hasbro Int.	●●●●	17
Wheel of Fortune 2	Hasbro Int.	●●●●	39
Who Wants to Be a Millionaire	Sony CEA	●●◖	35
Who Wants to Be a Millionaire: 3rd Edition	Sony CEA	●◖	47
Wild 9	Shiny/Interplay	●●●◖	15
Wild Arms 2	Sony CEA	●●●◖	33
The Wild Thornberrys: Animal Adv.	Mattel Int.	●◖	41
WipeOut 3	Psygnosis	●●●●	26
Woody Woodpecker Racing	Konami	●●	40
World Cup 98	EA Sports	●●●	10
World Destruction League: Thunder Tanks	3DO	◖	39
The World Is Not Enough	Electronic Arts	●●●	40
World's Scariest Police Chases	Activision	●●	47
Worms Armageddon	Hasbro Int.	●●●◖	27
Wu-Tang Shaolin Style	Activision	●●●	28
WWF Attitude	Acclaim	●●●●	24
WWF SmackDown!	THQ	●●●●◖	31
WWF SmackDown! 2: Know Your Role	THQ	●●●●●	40
WWF War Zone	Acclaim	●●●●	12
X Games Pro Boarder	ESPN Digital	●●●●	14
X-Files	Fox Interactive	●●●	28
X-Men: Children of the Atom	Acclaim	●●	6
X-Men: Mutant Academy	Activision	●●●	36
Xena: Warrior Princess	Electronic Arts	●●●◖	26
Xenogears	Square EA	●●●●	14
You Don't Know Jack!	Berkeley Systems	●●●●◖	25
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Featured Tricks & Strategies

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EXPERT GAMER

Special thanks to Expert Gamer for providing tricks and strategy materials.

Top Secret Agents

Greg Sewart, Terry Minnich,
Gary Steinman, Todd Zuniga, Sam Kennedy

Tricks, tricks and more tricks. That's what we want from you. If you've got a tip, a cheat or a code, tell us here: ***OPM@ziffdavis.com****. Or shout into the night air. We'll hear you.*

GRAN TURISMO™ 3

More tips on starting strong on the PS2's great racer

GRAN TURISMO 3 A-SPEC FOR DUMMIES

All right, so you've completed the first license test (right?) and you don't know which car to buy with your paltry credit allowance. The choices are limited, to be sure. But follow this guide before we deluge you with the particulars next month.

First, buy a Roadster Miata. It's ugly, but we all have to start somewhere. Enter races in the Sunday and Clubman cups, as well as the FR and NA-class races. Placing in the top three is a rarity, but don't worry, progress is being made.

Soldier on, and sooner or later you'll start earning enough money to buy upgrades. Go for things like a new ROM chip and a racing exhaust system. Avoid high-priced upgrades that offer very little performance increase (that's good advice for the entire GT3 experience). Be sure to buy a better transmission, too. Some decent tires wouldn't be a bad idea either, but only if it's not going to take too many credits.

As you win new cars, sell them immediately. Most of them are crap anyway. What you're hoarding your credits for is a Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution VI. It's the key to progressing quickly in Gran Turismo 3. The Evolution, in GT3 Producer Kazunori Yamauchi's own words, is "invincible." Considering its impressive specs when first bought, it's not hard to see why. With a 280-horsepower, turbo-charged engine and four-wheel drive, it's perfect for the twisty courses found in GT3. Very few cars can compete with the Evo on the amateur level.

Spend every cent you win to upgrade your Evo, including some fairly hard compound racing tires. Also, be sure to buy the lightest gear like new brakes and all three weight-reduction operations. Once you have the Evo up to around 560 horsepower and have earned an "ia" license, it's time to enter the Super Speedway 150-mile endurance race.

This race is a bear. Although you might not be the fastest car in the field, chances are you can win this race

TRICKS FROM THE 10 BEST-SELLING PS2 GAMES

① DARK CLOUD

Slim Gems

Need help tearing through Dark Cloud? Don't forget to turn the page and check out more in-depth strategy. Here, all you'll find is Gems. Which isn't half bad. The following is a list of Gems (weapon attachments that take one space but do multiple things) and what each does:

Garnet: +10 Animal, +10 Rock, +10 Fire, +5 Attack
Pearl: +10 Undead, +10 Thunder, +10 Endurance
Ruby: +10 Mimic, +10 Fire, +10 Speed
Sapphire: +10 Flying, +10 Wind, +10 Magic
Amethyst: +10 Mage, +10 Dino, +10 Ice
Opal: +10 Mage, +10 Steel, +10 Endurance
Peridot: +10 Plant, +10 Animal, +10 Holy, +5 Attack
Aquamarine: +10 Sea, +10 Flying, +10 Ice
Topaz: +10 Undead, +10 Flying, +10 Speed, +5 Attack
Turquoise: +10 Rock, +10 Mimic, +10 Ice
Emerald: +10 Dino, +10 Plant, +10 Magic
Diamond: + 5 vs. All Creatures, Extra +5 vs. Steel

③ CRAZY TAXI

Special Ride

At the character selection screen, quickly press L1, R1, L1, R1, L1, R1 or L1 + R1, L1 + R1, L1 + R1. Then, select a character to drive a bike instead of a taxi. Alternatively, complete all 16 Crazy Box levels to unlock the Special Taxi for each character, which is selectable in crazy box, arcade or original modes. To select the bike in crazy box mode, scroll to the right of Gus at the character selection screen. To select the bike in arcade or original mode, press Up at the character selection screen.

Disable arrow indicators: Before the character selection screen appears, hold R1 + Start. If you entered the code correctly, the message "No Arrows" will appear in the lower-left corner.

Disable destination indicator: Before the character selection screen appears, hold L1 + Start. If you entered the code correctly, the message "No Destination Mark" will appear in the lower-left corner.

Expert mode: Before the character selection screen appears, hold L1 + R1 + Start. If you entered the code correctly, the word "Expert" will appear in the lower-left corner. No stop or arrow indicators will appear in this mode.

④ ATV OFF-ROAD FURY

Hang Tough: Select pro-career mode, then enter "ALLOUTAI" as a name. If you entered the code correctly, the game will return to the name entry screen and you'll play against tougher AI than ever. Yikes.

The Big Reward: Successfully complete pro-career mode to unlock the maxed-out 1000cc Quad ATV.

⑤ TOKYO XTREME RACER ZERO

Wild Ride: Hold R1 while selecting a transmission type. Keep R1 held throughout the loading screen to see a man hanging from the roof of your car in first-person view.

CHOOSE YOUR WEAPONS

All of the cars in Gran Turismo 3 can be divided into four categories. Here's what they all mean:

4WD: That's four-wheel drive to you and me. The engine is in the front and the power is distributed to all four wheels. That makes this the most stable ride you're likely to find in a turn. The front tires tend to wear a little faster than the rears in a 4WD vehicle since they have to deal with both wheel spin *and* steering.

FR: Engine is in the front, power to the rear wheels. All your front tires are good for is steering. You'll find that the rear tires wear a little faster. Also, if you stomp on the gas while cutting the front wheels, the rear end will tend to swing around. Remembering weight transfer in braking and accelerating is paramount in an FR car.

FF: Engine in the front, power to the front wheels. Basically, your front tires will be dragging the rest of the car around. It's much harder to spin out, and easier to motor out of the turns. However, the front end will have a tendency to "push" to the outside of any turn if you brake too late.

MR: Mid-engine, power to the rear wheels. An MR car behaves a lot like an FR one. Of course, with all the extra weight near the back of the car you get much better bite, and it's a lot easier to slide the rear out if you get on the gas too early in a turn. These cars have a tendency for more horsepower.

on pit strategy alone. Most of your competitors will pit approximately every eight laps or less. Keeping that in mind, no matter how bad your tires look, only pit every 10 (i.e., when the lap counters says 11, 21, 31, etc.).

Using your superior pit strategy, you'll win the race, and have a lap on the entire field.

Now here's where fate takes over. Winning the endurance races awards you with one of four predetermined cars. The problem is that the one you get is chosen randomly. If all goes well, though, you should end up with the F090 Formula car. This thing is super-fast and super-stable, plus it can enter almost 50 percent of any races in Gran Turismo mode. Enter and win every race this thing qualifies for and by the end of it all you should have well over 500 million credits and dozens of cars in your garage.

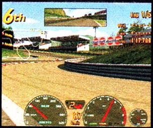
Now that you've got all that money, you barely need to use it. Go back and start finishing off the races you skipped early on because the F090 didn't exactly meet the qualifications for them. Simply choose the best car out of your garage that qualifies for each event, upgrade it as much as possible (with all that mad dough you've got) and blow the competition away. Every once in a while you might have to spend some cash on a new car. Just buy the top of the line, moneybags!

There you have it. The beginner's guide to fame and glory in the world of Gran Turismo 3: A-spec. But wait! As if we haven't made it easy enough for you, read on to find out how to cheat on some of the more difficult tracks in the game.

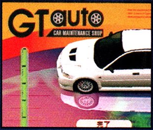
CHEATER'S CORNER

You can't cheat your way to a top license, but you can get one up on your competition during a real race. Certain tracks—like Apricot Hill and Trial Mountain—have chicanes on them that aren't bordered by walls. That's your cue to do a little "agricultural racing" and cut corners by driving through the grass or dirt surrounding them. It's not the most noble way to win a race, but we're in this for fun and profit, not to gain the respect of a bunch of faceless competitors. Right?

Also, try using other cars as bumpers. If you're following an opponent into a turn and want to get past him, just don't use your brake. Instead, hit him as he slows down for the turn. It should put him into the wall and slow you down enough to make the turn comfortably. Likewise, if you're in a turn and have a car on the outside of you, accelerate early. Don't worry if you start to slide out, since the car beside you will keep you on the track. Of course, he might hit the wall in the process. Oh well, them's the breaks.



Aim for the dirt to take as straight a line as possible.

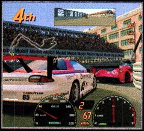


JIFFY LUBE

Change your oil after every race or series in Gran Turismo mode. When your oil light comes on, you can bet your car's about 20hp less powerful. That may not sound like a lot, but it's usually the difference between first or second place in the Professional league.

photos by Skyra

TRICKS OF THE GT3 TRADE



Think you know the best way to navigate a track in GT3? Or the best tactic to get the sweetest car sooner than everyone else? Think you have the skills to get gold on every license test (or even one, for that matter)? And can you put it into words?

If you think you're man or woman enough (we're not holding our breath), shoot us an e-mail. GT3 is going to be racing off shelves, so put down the controller for six minutes to help out your fellow man by giving advice (all GT3 related, of course). The address is: opm@ziffdavis.com. And make the e-mail subject read: GT3 Tricks.

If you send one of the best tricks, we'll send you a nice raspberry colored sedan with gold trim and some fuzzy dice. Or we'll put the tip into *OPM* along with your name and e-mail address. We get to choose which we think is best.

We'll start you on the trail by hoping that you can tell us some of the following things:

1. Any shortcuts within the tracks.
2. The best way to claim a gold on a license test.
3. The best way to get a trunk load of credits.
4. Winning a multiplayer race after eating a huge hamburger.

Sweet Wheels: Defeat the Speed King to get $3 million and unlock the Skyline car for purchase.

❻ MADDEN NFL 2001

Hitting Paydirt

Want to showboat with the kind of arrogance only a man making $8 million annually can display? Just hold one of the following button combinations immediately after scoring a touchdown to perform the corresponding touchdown celebration:

Hip thrust: Hold L1 + Square
Jump spike: Hold L1 + Circle
Say a prayer: Hold L1 + Triangle
Spike football: Hold L1 + X
Shoulder shake: Hold L1 + R1
Slam dunk: Hold L1 + R2

❼ TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT

Rock 'n' Bowl: Unlock Ogre to access Tekken Bowl mode.

More tunes: Juke Box in Tekken Bowl mode. Score more than 200 points in Tekken Bowl mode. Press Start, select "Bowling Options," and choose a song.

Not Tiger Woods: At the character selection screen, highlight Eddy and press Start to play as Tiger.

Heaven sent: At the character selection screen, highlight Devil and press Start to play as Angel.

❽ MIDNIGHT CLUB: STREET

Racing Big Bad Rides

Look for red dots that appear on various levels. Place your car on the dot until a click sound is heard to unlock a new car. Some of the dots can be found at the following locations:

London: Go near the center of the map. The dot is inside the Parliament building (block building with pillars on the outside). Drive through the window to get inside.

Find the reddish building with advertisements and an animated screen on it. Also, there is a box that almost looks like a padded cell in the middle of the street near it. Find the ramp leading up along the side of the building. Before you exit the ramp, you should be going approximately 30 to 45 mph (depending on the weight of your car). After hitting the roof, immediately slam on the brakes. The dot should be to the right of you.

Find the strange turn near the Parliament building. Climb up a ramp, then jump to the left or the right, but do not fall off. Turn

DARK CLOUD

With its innovative Georama feature, deep weapons-management system and involving storyline, Dark Cloud has something to satisfy almost any gamer. Action fans will dig the real-time dungeon crawling; RPG fans will have a blast rebuilding villages and developing the characters; and adventure fans will surely get swept up in the whole experience. The game includes plenty of tutorials and a fantastic manual (both printed and in-game), so we'll skip the basics. With some patience, most gamers should be able to get past even some of the toughest puzzles, so no need for a step-by-step walk-through. Instead, we present you with the answers to some of the tougher questions about the game (many of which you sent to us). If you've got other questions about Dark Cloud (or any other game, for that matter), be sure to send them to us at opm@ziffdavis.com.

I've collected all the Alta and completed all the events in Norune Village. But I still don't have 100% in the Request column. What now?

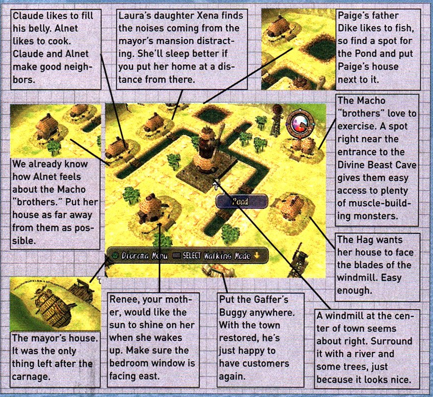
Now comes the fun part. Wander through the town and chat with all the residents. They'll have all kinds of requests, from the simple (put me near the windmill) to the challenging (put me somewhere where I can exercise). The goal is to set up your village so that each and every request is fulfilled. While you're at it, throw in some of those extra pieces, just to make things look purty. Below is how we set up Norune Village—although what you do may look drastically different (though we've done something beautiful, haven't we?). Going forward, just apply this same kind of logical urban planning to future villages.

My characters are all a bit wimpy—and they get thirsty all the time! How can I build them up?

Have you been searching the villages for those random chests that pop up after you complete a few levels in the local dungeon? If so, you've likely stumbled upon Gourds (which increase your Thirst meter), Fruits of Eden (which increase your Health meter) and Fluffy Doughnuts (which increase Toan's defense—the other characters also have their "favorite" foods that boost their defense, like Fish Candy for Xiao and Carrot Cookies for Osmond). But here's a nifty-neato (did we just say that?) trick that's not mentioned anywhere in the game: When you pop into first-person mode (tap R2) while in a house, you can move around, much like a first-person shooter. Doing so will allow you to see areas in these houses that aren't normally visible. Do a thorough search (be sure to look down toward your feet) in these houses, and you're sure to find a wealth of items. Also, remember to check areas outside of the houses; in Matataki Village, for example, you'll find chests by the pond and near the entrance to Goro's area. Finally, once you've fully finished rebuilding a village, do one last sweep through the entire area. You're bound to find a few more choice items that'll boost your health, defense and water capacity.

I don't have time to develop all six of my characters. Which ones should I focus on?

Obviously (or maybe not, since plenty of you asked this question), Toan is your primary fighter. Spend as much



Claude likes to fill his belly. Alnet likes to cook. Claude and Alnet make good neighbors.

Laura's daughter Xena finds the noises coming from the mayor's mansion distracting. She'll sleep better if you put her home at a distance from there.

Paige's father Dike likes to fish, so find a spot for the Pond and put Paige's house next to it.

We already know how Alnet feels about the Macho "brothers." Put her house as far away from them as possible.

The Macho "brothers" love to exercise. A spot right near the entrance to the Divine Beast Cave gives them easy access to plenty of muscle-building monsters.

The Hag wants her house to face the blades of the windmill. Easy enough.

The mayor's house. It was the only thing left after the carnage.

Renee, your mother, would like the sun to shine on her when she wakes up. Make sure the bedroom window is facing east.

Put the Gaffer's Buggy anywhere. With the town restored, he's just happy to have customers again.

A windmill at the center of town seems about right. Surround it with a river and some trees, just because it looks nice.

---

around to find the dot.

Once you start in London, make a 180-degree turn and head toward the blue blinking "Speed" sign. Go into the ramp at full speed. Go over on to the next roof and hit the brakes. Then, make a left turn and you will see the dot.

New York: Go near the park above the big tunnel. The dot is on top of a roof that you need to jump to reach.

Go near the aircraft carrier. The dot is inside the second story of a building that you need to jump to enter.

⑨ ONIMUSHA: WARLORDS

Bishamon O Flute: There are two places in this game where a very strange man hanging from the ceiling by his feet stares at you and ignores you. Later in the game, after you use the Evil Plate and open the door, he will talk to you. The man will now take you (whenever desired) to the Dark Realm. In the Dark Realm, kill monsters until two portals open; one to go up and one to go down. Keep going down to the last level (20th) while collecting all the items in route. There will be no monsters to kill on the last level. Open the box to get the Bishamon O flute. Keep the flute just before the last fight with the Demon King.

Bishamon Sword: In the Demon Realm (just after you destroy the Ultimate Creation) is a save mirror and three doors. Go to the door that resembles an iron gate. It will not open at first. Use the Bishimon O flute on it and enter. Go to the Bishimon Sword jutting out of the Skull Demon wall object and take it. It is more powerful than all three of your weapons put together, and it has speed. The sword also has an unlimited supply of magic.

⑩ NBA LIVE 2001

Getting Tricky

Strong pass: Press L2 + X in one-on-one mode to pass the ball quickly to your opponent.

Between the legs pass: Press R2 + X in one-on-one mode to pass the ball between your legs to your opponent.

Rolling pass: Press R1 + X in one-on-one mode to pass the ball by rolling it to your opponent.

time as you can developing his weapons. And here's a quick tip: Buy that Wise Owl Sword in Matataki Village as early on as possible, as it can be leveled up to the most powerful weapon in the game (but if you miss it, don't worry—plenty of other weapons will get you there as well). Next, you need a long-distance fighter. Once you get Ruby in your party, focus on her. Ruby's magic projectile attacks can get quite powerful, and she's a big help when squaring off against the Dark Genie and then working your way through Demon Shaft. (By the way, has anyone bothered developing Osmond? Is he worth the effort? Let us know.)

That Dark Genie is just killing me! Help me get past him!

The final boss (or is it...?) is a real doozy. Here's what you need to do: Start by stocking up on plenty of healing items, Stamina Powder and Revival Powder. You'll need a Dran's Feather as well, to avoid some of the Genie's attacks. In its first form, the Genie will be thrusting a hand up out of the ground. Avoid getting hit, check out the color of the gem on its hand, then switch Toan's weapon element to match. Unless the elements match up, you'll do little to no damage. (Pause the screen briefly to take a look if you need to.) In its next form, the Genie will be shooting a damaging purple energy beam, which should be avoided at all costs. The Genie will unleash some unavoidable full-screen attacks, but if you use a Stamina Powder, you should be fine. Use Ruby (set her element to Holy) to attack the Genie from a distance. The Genie's final form isn't too tough if you can avoid all the mayhem. Switch back to Toan (who should be your most powerful character) and attack the jewel in the Genie's mouth, making sure to get several hits in. Then run around the edges of the screen to avoid the energy beams and energy waves the Genie sends out against you. Try not to focus on the respawning enemies the Genie sends out at you, and be sure to have Revival Powders set to your active items, just in case.

I can't find any Mimic Breaker attachments—and I need them to build up my weapon. What gives?

Forgive us for scolding you, but did you sell those Mimic Breakers you acquired early on because you needed a quick cash fix? Then shame, shame. As you get further into the game, you'll encounter several new stores that sell various attachments and gems, but since Mimic Breakers aren't among them, you'll have to get your hands dirty and earn them the old-fashioned way. Did you remember that you can often acquire an attachment by defeating an enemy using an item? Meaning, if you toss a bomb at a Mimic, rather than slaying it with your sword, chances are good that it'll leave behind a Mimic Breaker. That also goes for all the other enemies out there, so head back into the dungeons and collect those attachments. (If you're looking for Mimics, try the third level of the Sun/Moon Temple.) And don't forget to troll those back-floor areas for extra gems, items and attachments.

I just found a great slingshot for Xiao, with this very useful Steal function. But I'm not really focusing on this character. Is there any way I can get this Steal function on Ruby's weapon?

Sure. Just spend an extra hour building up Xiao's weapon to at least level five, then break it and attach the SynthSphere to Ruby's ring. You can use any SynthSphere from any character on any other character.

Boy, that fishing game is lame. Should I bother playing it?

Nah. We skipped it, too. If you've got all the time in the world, it's a good way to get your hands on some hard-to-find items. But we found a better use for all that fish bait you can acquire in the dungeons. Sell it. For a lot of money. And then just buy what you need at those well-stocked stores that appear later in the game.

TRICKS FROM THE 20 BEST-SELLING PS ONE GAMES

❶ MAT HOFFMAN'S PRO BMX

Biking with Mr. 900: Get all 30 covers and two gold medals in Career mode with any character to unlock Tony Hawk on an old girl's bike.

Opening up the Warehouse: Score a 200,000 combo without any codes activated to unlock the Warehouse level from Tony Hawk's Pro Skater. If done correctly, a message will confirm that the level has been unlocked.

Get ready to skin those knees: Get all 30 covers and two gold medals with all characters to unlock the Burnside level from Tony Hawk's Pro Skater. If done correctly, a message will confirm that the level has been unlocked.

Unlocking Granny: It's easier than you'd think. Just hit pause and go to Retry within any Career mode level 10 times without letting the timer run out. On the 10th try, the game will tell you that "You ride like a grandma." It'll then unlock the lady of all of our dreams for the next run. She has three bikes and three special moves. After your first run with her, it'll say: "Granny's going in for a cup of tea now." But you can start your own Career mode with her now. Thank the heavens.

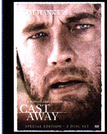
❷ SPEC OPS: RANGER ELITE

Living longer lives: Enter "ROCKSTAR" as a name. Pause the game and enable the "Invulnerability" option.

DVD EGGS

Chaplin DVD

Enter the Cast and Crew screens for Robert Downey Jr., Kevin Kline, Anthony Hopkins, Dan Aykroyd, Richard Attenborough and others. Then press the Up button on your remote and a small Charlie Chaplin icon should be highlighted. Press Enter to view some additional interview sequences.



Cast Away DVD

Throw in the *Cast Away* 2nd disc and hurry over to the Video Stills and Galleries. After you've achieved that, highlight Raft Escape and then merrily push the Left arrow button. Are you there? Now, you'll see angel wings as seen on the Fed-Ex box. Good times.

A Fish Called Wanda DVD

Here's a sweet four-step process to unlocking an egg from one of the funniest movies ever. First, insert the disc into your DVD player. Second, Press the Right arrow key and you should see the treasure chest glow with the anticipation of being clicked on. Third, select said treasure chest by pressing Enter. Fourth, you will be able to watch a looping aquarium segment.

Requiem for a Dream DVD

One of the most gruesome films in recent memory, those of you who bought the DVD to watch it time and again frighten us. But, you might as well know this egg exists. First, get to the main menu and press Down on the remote. It'll highlight Hear Tappy's Amazing Life Story. Then press Enter and you'll be able to watch the show that poor Sara Goldfarb watches in the film. Poor Ellen Burstyn, she should've won the Oscar.

Repo Man DVD

Grab your Repo Man DVD and let's unlock some eggs! Go to the Extras menu, highlight Talent Bios then press Up. Part of the Malibu's dash will light up like the 4th of July sky. Press Enter and you'll be privy to a short video explaining the repo man code.

Charlie's Angels DVD

From a loyal reader: Select Special Features from the main menu. It will bring you to a screen with three angels. Select Up to bring you to the next screen featuring Bill Murray. Highlight Wired Angels and press Left. A small rectangle should appear on Bosley's jacket. Press Enter to watch a bizarre film of Drew Barrymore getting her head molded in plaster. Is it for a future project? Wish I knew.
Bobby Strobeck
Djstrobie@msn.com

Have your own DVD Eggs? Whip them our way by e-mailing: opm@ziffdavis.com and title the e-mail "DVD Eggs." If we use it, we'll make you famous by putting your name in our mag.

twisted metal: BLACK™

Anyone who's played the latest installment in the Twisted Metal series knows how difficult the game is. Even the designers make it no secret that they wanted to give fans a nice challenge with this one. In order to help you make sense of the game's massive arsenal of weaponry and its wealth of secrets, we've put together a guide to help you on your way. Next month: We return with more tips about tricky spots and secret items.

Hidden Cars

YellowJacket

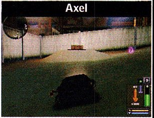
Junkyard

Shoot down the airplane circling the level. It'll crash into the gully. The wreckage will open up a secret passageway that spans the level. Inside the tunnel is a control panel and a weird-looking concrete structure. Shoot the panel until it blows up, then YellowJacket is yours.

YellowJacket's Special Attack

This Special will surround the Taxi Cab with spikes. Trigger the attack to fire the spikes in four directions as the primary attack. As a secondary attack, you can ram other cars while the spikes are deployed. In addition, use Turbo when ramming the enemy. The damage will be even greater!

Axel



Freeway

Grab some Gas Cans and head to the construction site. Find an incline so you can aim your weapons at the crane holding a small building. Shoot the Cans into the control room of the crane to force it to drop the building. Then blast the walls of the dropped building. Inside: Axel.

Axel's Special Attack

Axel can send a burst of energy out from his wheel to blast enemies around him. This attack can hit multiple enemies, making packs of cars a tempting target. By tapping Up while your Special is selected, you'll trigger the second attack. Then he can roll right over opponents.

Manslaughter

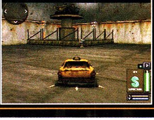
Suburbs

There's a hill overlooking the factory district. Leap off of the hill (marked with a Gas Can) onto the building "A & L Transportation." Shoot out the small raise to open a hole into the building. Drop inside and shoot the control switch.

Warthog's Special Attack

Warthog can fry opponents with his cutting laser. Try to immobilize an opponent with a Freeze before using the beam. This attack does severe damage, and you can increase your victim's plight by firing your machine guns to do a little bit more hurting.

WartHog



Prison Ship

Exit the Prison Ship, and take a right. Follow the path outside of the boat until you find the crates with a Health Power-Up on top of them. Shoot the crates until they form a ramp, then ride up and shoot the hull of the ship to reveal a secret passage into the Detention Center.

ManSlaughter's Special Attack

This truck can lob giant explosive rocks. The more that impact, the more damage done. If the rocks hit the ground they'll scatter and bounce a bit before exploding. This attack can hit over such a wide area that it is ideal for exploring levels and finding what you can and cannot destroy.

THE WEAPONS

Machine Guns Damage: 1-5
Your standard weapon, always fire it in addition to the other weapons you may be using to do some extra damage.

Fire Missile Damage: 8
Although it has only a limited homing ability, these missiles are ideal for taking pot shots at the enemy cars.

Homing Missile Damage: 5
These are exactly like the Fire Missiles, except that they home in on opponents better, and do not hit as hard.

Power Missile Damage: 20
These missiles are extraordinarily powerful. However, they have no homing capability at all.

Gas Can Damage: 11
You can trigger the Gas Can to fall on an enemy car, and if you hit dead-on, you'll hurt your opponent even more. Note: Hit Down, Up, Down to drop the Gas Can behind your car.

Ricochet Bomb Damage: 9
These bombs will bounce several times around an area before blowing up. They work well in tight corridors.

Environment Hazard Damage: Special
These weapons vary from level to level. For additional information, check out the level maps.

Note: The Skill Power-Up is random. A few seconds after you pick it up, one of three weapons will be chosen for you.

Skill Reticle Damage: 7-70
Highlight an opponent with the Reticle and keep focused on the enemy car. Fire when the counter reaches 1.

Skill Satellite Damage: 7-70
Trigger the Satellite with the L2 button and try to line an enemy car up on the target that appears. When the target glows red, tap L2 again to trigger the attack.

Skill Zoomie Damage: 2-20
This weapon is a simple spray of missiles. They have limited homing capabilities, so you'll need to aim somewhat.

③ GT2

Getting hot license test cars: To get the following cars, you must get all gold on the given license:
Gold B: Spoon S2000 (J)
Gold A: Dodge Concept Car (red)
Gold IC: 3000GT LM Edition
Gold IB: Del Sol LM Edition
Gold IA: FTO LM Edition
Gold S: Toyota GT-ONE Race Car '99

⑤ BLADE

Never-ending lives: At the main menu, press Left(3), Right, L2, L1, R2, R1. Then, press Start during the game and activate that option on the cheat menu.

Infinite ammunition: At the main menu, press Down, Right, Up, Left, L2, L1, R2, R1. Then, press Start during the game and activate that option on the cheat menu.

⑥ SPEC OPS: STEALTH PATROL

Going, going, God
Enter "ROCKSTAR" as a name. Pause the game and enable the "Invulnerability" option.

⑨ FORD RACING

All kinds of cars
At the name entry screen you can enter: GIMMEGIMME

⑩ DAVE MIRRA FREESTYLE BMX

All levels: At the level selection screen in Pro Quest mode, press Left, Up, Right, Down, Left, Down, Right, Up, Left, Circle to unlock all levels.

All bikes: At the bike selection screen in Pro Quest mode, press Up, Left, Up, Down, Up, Right, Left, Right, Circle to unlock all bikes. Note: Each time a new bike is selected this code will have to be re-entered.

All styles: At the style selection screen in Pro Quest mode, press Left, Up, Right, Down, Left, Down, Right, Up, Left, Circle to unlock all styles. Note: Each time a new bike is selected this code will have to be re-entered.

⑪ TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2

Surf Over to Hawaii
Chopper Drop: Hawaii level: Earn three gold medals with all characters to unlock the fantastically undramatic THPS2 Chopper Drop.

HEALTH AND ITEMS

Repair Stations: These useful devices will restore your car to its optimum health. However, you must drive straight through them in order to get healed. Repair Stations can only be used a certain number of times before they shut down permanently.

Health Power-Ups: These bits of health are great for restoring small amounts of damage. Grab these whenever you can, even if you don't need to be healed—it prevents the other cars from healing.

Mercy Killings: After you destroy an enemy car, its driver will run around the screen for a few seconds before disappearing. If you hit the driver, you'll get a small health bonus.

Turbo: These come in handy when you run into sticky situations, especially against bosses. Using a Turbo increases your speed by approximately 25 percent. Hit the Square button twice or press in and hold the right analog (R4) button.

Black Cubes: These carefully placed cubes will unlock new levels and characters in the game, but they're not easily stumbled upon. Most every level has a secret of some sort, so make sure to thoroughly explore them all. Or, wait until next month when we show you where some of them are.

CHEAT IF YOU MUST, YOU COWARD

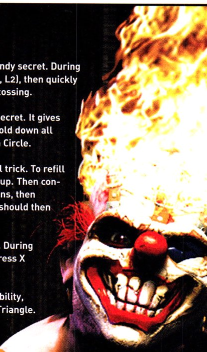
Invincibility: Totally stuck in TMB? Well, then try out this handy secret. During the game press and hold all four shoulder buttons (R1, R2, L1, L2), then quickly press Right, Left, Down and Up. Tah-dah, no more controller tossing.

God Mode: Or, become the ultimate bad-ass with this little secret. It gives you unlimited health, weapons and more. During the game, hold down all four shoulder buttons, then quickly press Up, X, Left and then Circle.

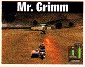
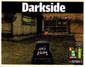
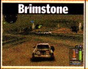
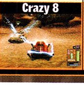
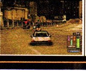
Weapons Into Health: This is an odd, yet potentially helpful trick. To refill some health, first make sure you have some weapons picked up. Then convert these into power by holding down all four shoulder buttons, then quickly press Triangle, X, Square and Circle. Your energy bar should then fill up.

One-Hit Kills: For some instant gratification, try this one out. During the game hold down all four shoulder buttons, then quickly press X twice and Up.

Mega-Machine Guns: To get the Mega-Machine Gun firing ability, hold down all the shoulder buttons, then press X twice, then Triangle.



Choose Your Twisted Metal: Black Contestant

Who?	What's their deal?	Who?	What's their deal?
Roadkill	Roadkill's major benefit is that he can shoot out multiple rockets at opponents (the longer you hold down the Special button, the more he'll shoot). However, he isn't well armored, so you have to keep moving.	**Mr. Grimm** 	Mr. Grimm's Special is a spectral skull that will plow straight into an enemy. Always freeze opponents first, as it can be difficult to land. Unfortunately, Grimm is very vulnerable, so go after weaker cars first.
Outlaw	Outlaw can dish out some serious damage with his machine-gun turret Special attack, especially when you hit the button several times to also fire out rockets. He is nicely armored, so close-range combat is fine.	**Spectre**	When you have weak armor like Spectre, hiding is a must. So pick a spot and whittle down opponents with your missiles (which can home in on rivals—even behind walls). Use your speed to escape if you're found.
SweetTooth	Everyone loves SweetTooth's new Special attack (he transforms into a mech and sprays out missiles). For the best results, shoot at opponents in the distance who are headed toward you, ensuring more hits.	**Darkside** 	Darkside's armor pretty much ensures that she can wade into a group of cars and come out relatively unscathed. Also, her Special is ideal for mauling packs of cars—but it can be stopped with a freeze attack.
Brimstone 	Brimstone's Special (a religious zealot who lobs molotov cocktails into rival cars) can be hard to hit with. For the best results, freeze opponents first. Also, since he's weak, use lots of hit-'n'-run tactics.	**Junkyard Dog**	The Junkyard Dog is a nasty truck with a nasty Special (a hook that latches onto cars and explodes). Getting the timing of the hook is tricky, so practice up. Then, go to the outskirts of levels and fight head-on.
Crazy 8 	Crazy 8's Special attack allows you to shock an enemy with arcs of lightning, and the more you press the special button, the more volts you can send your victim's way. Nail any straggling cars with this.	**Shadow** 	Although weak, Shadow has two Special attacks: One fires out spectral purple haze, and the other pops out Raven so she can riddle her opponents with machine-gun bullets. Hang back and keep out of trouble.

WIN A TMB JACKET

So you're the best at TMB? Well, prove it! We've got a cool TMB jackets to send out and they'll go to the person who sends in the finest TMB tips and tricks in the land. It's not just codes we want, we want to know how to blast the waistcoat off our worst enemy. Send an e-mail to: opm@ziffdavis.com and put these words in the subject line: TMB Tricks. Now let TMB genius shine. (See page 24 for the official rules.)

Stylish, cool and corduroy. You want it? Send a trick.

Blessed are you: Successfully complete the game by completing all level objectives in career mode with all of the original characters, Officer Dick, Spider-Man, and a custom skater and you'll get access to the Skate Heaven level.

Zuniga bites the dust: To see the Neversoft Bails FMV sequence with rookie *OPM* skater Todd Zuniga, earn a medal in every competition with any character.

Making of a classic: To check out the making of the Neversoft FMV sequence, you'll have to earn three golds with Private Carrera.

⑫ GRAND THEFT AUTO 2

No fuzz: To play without police enter "LOSEFEDS" as a player name.

High crime: To play with the maximum wanted level enter "DESIRES" as a player name.

⑭ TOMB RAIDER: THE LAST REVELATION

Guns, bullets and health aplenty: Turn Lara exactly north according to her compass, then enter the inventory screen. Highlight the "Small Medipack" selection, hold L1 + L2 + R1 + R2 + Up, then exit the inventory screen.

All kinds of items: Turn Lara exactly north according to her compass, then enter the inventory screen. Highlight the "Large Medipack" selection, hold L1 + L2 + R1 + R2 + Down, then exit the inventory screen.

⑰ SNO-CROSS CHAMPIONSHIP RACING

Toon track: At the main menu, hold R and press Right, Up, Left, Circle, Triangle, Square. If you entered the code correctly, the screen will flicker. Enter single-player mode and select the Kiruna track to race on the cartoon track.

Dog Days of Summer: At the main menu, hold R and press Triangle, X, Circle(2), X, Triangle. If you entered the code correctly, the screen will flicker. Enter single-player mode and select the Calgary track to race on the summer track.

All-Terrain Vehicle ATV: At the main menu, hold R1 and press Up, Right, Down, Up, Right, Down. If you entered the code correctly, the screen will flicker. Select any snowmobile to begin the race with the ATV.

Fun with Go-Carts: At the main menu, hold

TRICKS FROM THE 20 BEST-SELLING PS ONE GAMES (CONT.)

R1 and press Right(2), Left(2), Right(2). If you entered the code correctly, the screen will flicker. Select any snowmobile to begin the race with the Go-Cart.

⑱ TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER

Policing the joint

Play as Officer Dick: Collect all 30 tapes with any character in career mode to unlock Officer Dick as a playable character.

You're in the army now: Start a game in any mode with Officer Dick. Pause the game, then hold L1 and press Triangle, Up, Triangle, Up, Circle, Up, Left, Triangle. The screen will not shake. Exit the game and return to the character selection screen. Private Carrera will appear in place of Officer Dick. This character has full stats.

⑲ TEKKEN 3

Strike a new pose: After winning a match, hold any kick button during the entire replay to view your character's alternate winning pose. Hold any punch button during the entire replay to view your character's normal winning pose. Note: Some characters do not have an alternate winning pose.

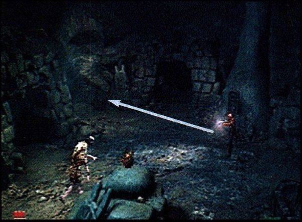
⑳ DRIVER

These codes need to be entered at the main menu. After that, it's much, much easier driving.

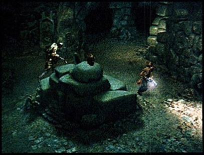
Invincibility: Quickly press L2(2), R2(2), L2, R2, L2, L1, R2, R1, L2, L1(2).

No law dogs: Quickly press L1, L2, R1(4), L2(2), R1(2), L1(2), R2.

ALONE IN THE DARK THE NEW NIGHTMARE



Follow the arrow as soon as he's down on his knees.



Use the stacked stones in the center to keep the monster away by running ahead of him.

ESCAPING THE FINAL BOSS WITH YOUR HEAD STILL INTACT

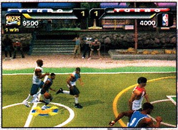
When you're going toe-to-toe with the second (and final) boss in Alone in the Dark: The New Nightmare, you won't have to kill him. Pull out either a grenade launcher or the rocket launcher and start running circles around the rocks in the center. He'll get snagged on the stones, giving you time to turn and blast him once or twice (maybe even three times). As soon as he stumbles and falls down to his knees, run to the opening that the above arrow points to. This is the only way to kill him. Once you're in the tunnel, a strange, unexplained mutation will happen and you'll do away with the enemy. Two things: Don't try to run into the tunnel until he's down on his knees and don't forget to grab the statue from above the stacked stones after he's dead.

NBA STREET

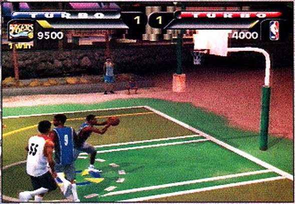
SERVING DINNER AROUND THE CLOCK

There are lots of ways to juice up your Gamebreaker meter, but nothing works quite so well as serving it up and slamming it down. The dunk is called "Dinner's Served" and it'll lead to a Gamebreaker way more quickly than fancy dribbling. Here's a good trick to getting it done:

When you inbound, get it to your quickest player, usually a guard. Also, make sure the player with top Quicks can dunk. Then, turbo right to the hoop, dodging players along the way. Once you get to the free-throw line, there's a good chance you'll have an open lane. Hold down each of the Turbo buttons (L1+L2+R1+R2) and hit the shoot button. Your baller will dish it to himself off the backboard. Just watch that Gamebreaker meter soar!



TURBO
9500
1 win
4000



A clear path to the lane is the only way your baller will even try tossing it off the backboard.

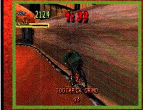
MAT HOFFMAN'S PRO BMX

The Secret Tapes

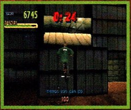
Finding the Secret Tape in each level can be pretty difficult. We figured we'd ease your pain. Here's where to go and how to get there. Now acquiring those troublesome tapes won't seem so tough.

The Bike Factory

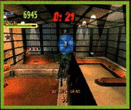
Getting this Hidden Cover is a four-step process. It's one of the tougher covers to get, but the more air your biker can get, the easier it'll be.



First off, you'll need to grind past the switch in this picture. Next, you'll need to speed out of the garage door that's to the far right of the starting point.



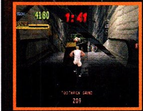
Get up the speed you'll need for this jump by doing some vert tricks at the opposite side of the Factory. Once you've got the speed, time the jump to get on this platform.



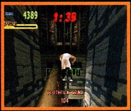
There's no time to spare once you've broken the glass. Center yourself immediately and Bunnyhop. Once you're airborne, start a grind and you'll cruise to the cover.

London

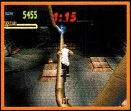
This Hidden Cover is more fun to find than it is challenging. That's not to say it won't take a little practice and luck to grab it from its dangerous heights.



You need to ride the pre-escalator rail to get enough speed going for the Bunnyhop you have to make off the center of the escalator. Do it right and you'll get some crazy air.



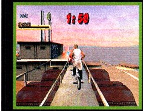
If you get enough air, you'll have no problem making it onto this tube with a grind of some sort. When you get close to the end, Bunnyhop through the grate.



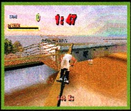
First off, you'll need to grind past the switch in this picture. Next, you'll need to speed out of the garage door that's to the far right of the starting point.

The Treatment Plant

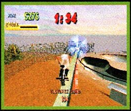
Finding the Treatment Plant Hidden Cover is not a problem if you're decent at balancing on beams. Once you're on the beam, the path will lead you to where you need to be.



From the start, turn to the right and go up the big ramp. Once the incline levels off, jump on the rail to the right. Remember to keep grinding (there's no need to jump).



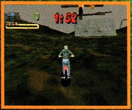
It's strangely easy, but you just have to keep the grind going to get close to the Hidden Cover. Remember to lean accordingly if it seems like you might fall.



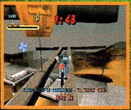
After the long grind, you'll reach a rooftop. To the right is yet another beam that's sort of high up. Get some speed, Bunnyhop onto it, and ride it to the Hidden Cover.

The Construction Yard

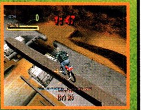
The Construction Yard boasts the most challenging Hidden Cover in the game. It takes precision; if you don't jump at the right time, you'll go without.



First, line up with the left side of the ramp, then start to cheat to the right just a bit in order to center yourself (otherwise, you'll end up grinding the wrong way).



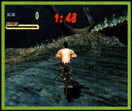
If you score the right angle, you're halfway there. You shouldn't have a problem with balance; just remember to jump early enough to hit the next beam.



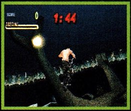
If you jumped at the right time, you'll be led the correct way and the Hidden Cover will be in front of you. Don't just fall off the beam—jumping will ensure that the cover is yours.

New York

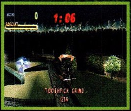
Strangely, you can get the Hidden Cover in NYC within the first 10 seconds of the run. Of course, falling off a tree a few times can slow you down.



Right from the starting point, veer left. Then, once you're on the gray ground, spin around so you can get max speed as you're approaching the tree.



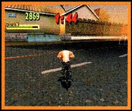
Once your speed is up, Bunnyhop off the end of the ramp. Once you're airborne, try to get between the tree's two splayed branches. If you do, you're golden.



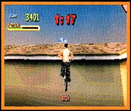
After you've launched between the uprights, hold Triangle to start a grind. Ride the branch all the way to the end and you'll smack right into the NYC Hidden Cover.

La Habra

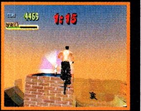
This is the last Hidden Cover you'll have to get and it'll give you fits if you're not a really good biker. It's a lot easier to get in that chimney than it looks.



Take a left from the starting point and you'll see this ramp. Don't go for it right away, though. First, do a trick to get enough speed, otherwise you'll fall short of the roof.



Getting onto the roof is the next step you have to take after you've gotten enough speed. Don't grind. Just Bunnyhop at the top of the ramp and ride.



Once you're on top of the roof just line yourself up with that angelically glowing Hidden Cover. Bunnyhop at the chimney and the coveted Cover is yours.

COVER STORY

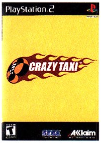
Does game cover art make any difference to the success of the game? Not really...

ARMY MEN: SARGE'S HEROES 2

PlayStation 2
ARMY MEN
SARGE'S HEROES 2
REAL COMBAT. PLASTIC MEN.
3DO

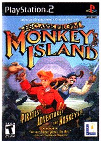
How do you top a best-selling blockbuster? That's the question posed at www.armymen.com about Sarge's second game. Yes, the blockbuster that peaked at the heady heights of No. 13 in the October 1999 multi-format charts. Did you really want a sequel? Maybe not, but here it is anyway. The cover is strong, and given the immense volume of Army Men products on the market, you can at least tell what the franchise is with a quick glimpse. Sarge's Heroes 2 scored ●●◖ in issue 45.

CRAZY TAXI



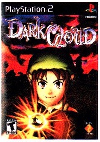
It's crazy and it's got taxis in it. The yellow gets the point across, and the brand is so well established thanks to the excellent arcade game and Dreamcast port that the iconic approach proved to be successful. The game went straight in at No. 4 in the charts when it was released and has continued to sell very well, climbing to No. 3 in this month's chart. In issue 46 we gave it ●●●●.

ESCAPE FROM MONKEY ISLAND



Front and center, the cover features a glowing quote ("We need more games like this") from our issue 46 review, which gave a ●●●●● score to the game—so talk about great art! Seriously, though, the cover ably shows the gorgeous cartoon art style of the game, and also manages to get across the sillier side of the game with the "Pirates! Adventure! and Monkeys!!" tag. Guybrush Threepwood should be proud.

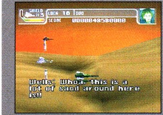
DARK CLOUD



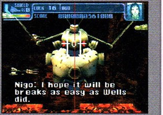
There are no two ways about it—Dark Cloud's hero Toan is not the greatest-looking hero to ever grace the cover of either a magazine (he was our coverboy on issue 45) or a game box. His generic anime-character looks and green turban don't yell "hero" in any shape or form. Still, the cover is striking and gets the dark motif of the game across well...and irrespective of the cover art the game scored a respectable ●●●●◖ in issue 46 and went in to storm the PS2 charts by going straight in at No. 1.

ALL YOUR BASE ARE BELONG TO AGETEC

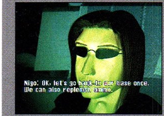
A selection of amusing lines from the poorly translated Shooter: Space Shot. (Note that even in the game's ending Agetec wasn't spelled correctly).



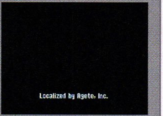
Wells: Whoa, this is a lot of sand around here is!!



Nigo: I hope it will be breaks as easy as Wells did.



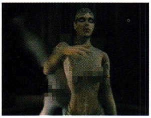
Nigo: OK, let's go back to our base once. We can also replenish ammo.



Localized by Agete, Inc.

NAKED VAMPIRES!

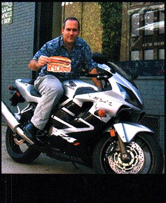
We knew going in that Dracula: The Resurrection (see review on page 114) held a Mature rating for animated violence—but the back of the box did nothing to prepare us for a scene featuring the nearly nude seductress vampires of Dracula's castle. The first time we watched this scene, we couldn't even pay attention to the story elements presented since we were in such shock of the bare nipples before us. And what's with the silly acrobatics they're all up to? Anyway, these are the first screens we've ever had to censor. (Sorry, kids.)



PEOPLE REALLY WIN!

This winner won with a weiner

"This is the best day of my life!" shouted Jordan Sloane when we told him he won our Namco Moto GP contest (*OPM* 42). Thanks to his postcard with, of all things, a giant hot dog on it, this New York City resident can now ride in style on his new Honda CBR600F4i motorcycle. Congratulations, Jordan! And don't forget to wear a helmet!



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Demo Disc playables: Crash Bandicoot 2, Croc, Armored Core, Madden NFL 98, Cool Boarders 2, Colony Wars

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Cool Boarders Strategy
Demo Disc playables: Bushido Blade, Vs., Star Wars: Masters of Teräs Käsi, Jet Moto 2, Cardinal SYN, Ghost in the Shell, Moto Racer, Test Drive 4

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Tomb Raider II Strategy
Demo Disc playables: NFL GameDay 98, CART World Series, Frogger

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Alundra Strategy
Demo Disc playables: NCAA GameBreaker 98, Tomb Raider II, Command & Conquer: Red Alert, Crime Killer

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Demo Disc playables: Bloody Roar, Monster Rancher, Shipwreckers
non-playables: Alundra, NBA ShootOut 98, Saga Frontier, Mega Man Neo

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Resident Evil 2 Strategy
Demo Disc playables: Hot Shots Golf, Pitfall 3D, WCW Nitro, ONE

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Demo Disc playables: Einhänder, Gex: Enter the Gecko, Klonoa

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non-playables: NFL Xtreme, MLB 99, Tekken 3

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Demo Disc playables: Tekken 3, Turbo Prop Racing

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Elemental Gearbolt Strategy
Demo Disc playables: Spyro the Dragon, Duke Nukem: Time to Kill, WWF War Zone, The Unholy War, S.C.A.R.S.

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Spyro the Dragon
Demo Disc playables: Metal Gear Solid, Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver, Test Drive 5, Devil Dice, Brunswick Bowling, Ninja, NFL Xtreme, Cool Boarders 3

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Demo Disc playables: MediEvil, WarGames Defcon 1, Dragon Seeds, G-Darius, Future Cop L.A.P.D., Colony Wars Vengeance
non-playables: Crash Bandicoot: WARPED, Tenchu, Tai-Fu, Rugrats, Abe's Exoddus, Brave Fencer Musashi, You Don't Know Jack

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Crash Bandicoot Strategy
Demo Disc playables: Tomb Raider III, Crash Bandicoot: WARPED, Bomberman World, A Bug's Life, Running Wild, Kagero, Metal Gear Solid, Gran Turismo

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Tomb Raider III Strategy
Demo Disc playables: Silent Hill, Moto Racer 2, Brave Fencer Musashi, Apocalypse, T'ai Fu

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Demo Disc playables: Syphon Filter, Bust a Groove, Shadow Madness, Fisherman's Bait, Akuji the Heartless, No One Can Stop Mr. Domino, Street Sk8er

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Demo Disc playables: R4: Ridge Racer Type 4, WCW/nWo Thunder, Rollcage, Warzone 2100, Rugrats: Search for Reptar

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Demo Disc playables: Ehrgeiz, Gex 3: Deep Cover Gecko, Legend of Legaia, Contender

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Gex 3 Strategy
Demo Disc playables: Oddworld: Abe's Exoddus, NFL Blitz, Bust-a-Move 4, R4: Ridge Racer Type 4, Elmo's Letter Adventure

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Demo Disc playables: Ape Escape, MLB 2000, The Next Tetris, Tony Hawk's Pro Skater, Croc 2, Soul of the Samurai, Bloody Roar 2

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Ape Escape Strategy
Demo Disc playables:
Final Fantasy VIII, 3 Xtreme, Tiny Tank, Jade Cocoon, Macross VF-X 2, You Don't Know Jack, Centipede, Ultimate 8-Ball

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Jade Cocoon Strategy
Demo Disc playables: Um Jammer Lammy, Sled Storm, Chocobo Racing, Pong, Monaco Grand Prix Racing

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Final Fantasy VIII Strategy
Demo Disc playables: Metal Gear Solid, WipeOut 3, Omega Boost, NFL Xtreme 2, Jet Moto 3, Toy Story 2, Pac-Man World

Issue 26 **$10**
November 1999
Dino Crisis Strategy
Demo Disc playables: Grandia, Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver, Killer Loop, 40 Winks, NFL Blitz, Crash Bandicoot: WARPED, Cool Boarders 3

Issue 27 **$10**
December 1999
Crash Team Racing Strategy
Demo Disc playables: GT 2, Madden NFL 2000, NFL GameDay 2000, NCAA Game Breaker 2000, Cool Boarders 4

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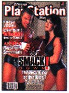
Demo Disc playables: Dino Crisis, NHL FaceOff 2000, NBA Basketball 2000, Tarzan, Army Men: Air Attack, WCW Mayhem

Issue 29–$10
February 2000

☐ 

Demo Disc playables: Tomba! 2, Tomb Raider The Last Revelation, SuperCross Circuit, MTV Sports Snowboarding

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Demo Disc playables: Syphon Filter 2, Crash Team Racing, NCAA Final Four 2000, Spyro 2, Silent Bomber, Twisted Metal 4

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Demo Disc playables: Colony Wars: Red Sun, Spider-Man, Eagle One: Harrier Attack, Hot Shots Golf 2, RollcageStage II, Gekido

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Demo Disc playables: MediEvil II, NCAA March Madness 2000, NASCAR Rumble, Speed Punks, Rugrats Studio Tour

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Demo Disc playables: X-Men Mutant Academy, Threads of Fate, WWF SmackDown!, Gauntlet Legends, Grind Session

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Who Wants to Be a Millionaire

Demo Disc playables: Star Wars Episode 1: Jedi Power Battles, Tenchu 2, WDW: Magical Racing Tour, Destruction Derby Raw, Play with the Teletubbies

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Soul Reaver 2

Demo Disc playables: Grind Session, Rayman 2: The Great Escape, Ms. Pac-Man Maze Madness, Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX, Tyco R/C Racing

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Star Wars

Demo Disc playables: Bust-A-Groove 2, RC Revenge, Team Buddies, Sydney 2000, Muppet Monster Adventure, Sno-Cross Championship Racing

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PS2 Revealed

Demo Disc playables: Crash Bash, Incredible Crisis, Jarrett & LaBonte Stock Car Racing, Spyro: Year of the Dragon, UFC, *plus* Metal Gear Solid 2 video!

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Crash Bash

Demo Disc playables: Madden NFL 2001, Star Wars Demolition, MTV Sports Pure Ride, Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX, Disney's The Emperor's New Groove

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Gran Turismo 3

Demo Disc playables: Driver 2, Spider-Man, The Grinch, 102 Dalmations, Army Men Air Attack 2

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Z.O.E.

Demo Disc playables: Spyro: Year of the Dragon, Star Wars Demolition, Crash Bash, Cool Boarders 2001, You Don't Know Jack, Mort the Chicken

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March 2001

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EA Sports Big

Demo Disc playables: CTR: Crash Team Racing, Hot Shots Golf 2, Grind Session, Disney's Tarzan
Video previews: Soul Reaver 2, ATV Offroad Fury, Fear Effect 2

Issue 43–$10
April 2001

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Twisted Metal: Black

Demo Disc playables: Championship Surfer, Power Spike Volleyball, Tigger's Honey Hunt
Video previews: Twisted Metal: Black, Shadow of Destiny

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MoH: Frontline

Demo Disc playables: Cool Boarders 2001, MediEvil 2, The Legend of Dragoon, The Emperor's New Groove, Metal Gear Solid, Legacy of Kain, Ape Escape, Tekken 3, Syphon Filter 2, *plus* The Bouncer, Red Faction videos!

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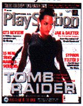
Dark Cloud

Demo Disc playables: Grind Session, Hot Shots Golf, Dino Crisis, Klonoa
Video previews: Aladdin in Nasira's Revenge, Dark Cloud

Issue 46–$10
July 2001

☐ 

Tomb Raider

Demo Disc playables: Tomb Raider II, III & Last Revelation, Alone in the Dark, Gran Turismo 2, Dave Mirra: Maximum Remix, Aladdin in Nasira's Revenge
Video previews: Winback, Gauntlet: Dark

Issue 47–$10
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Final Fantasy

Demo Disc playables: Final Fantasy VIII
Video previews: Final Fantasy VII, FFIX, FF Tactics, Klonoa 2, Star Wars: Super Bombad Racing and the Final Fantasy Movie Trailer

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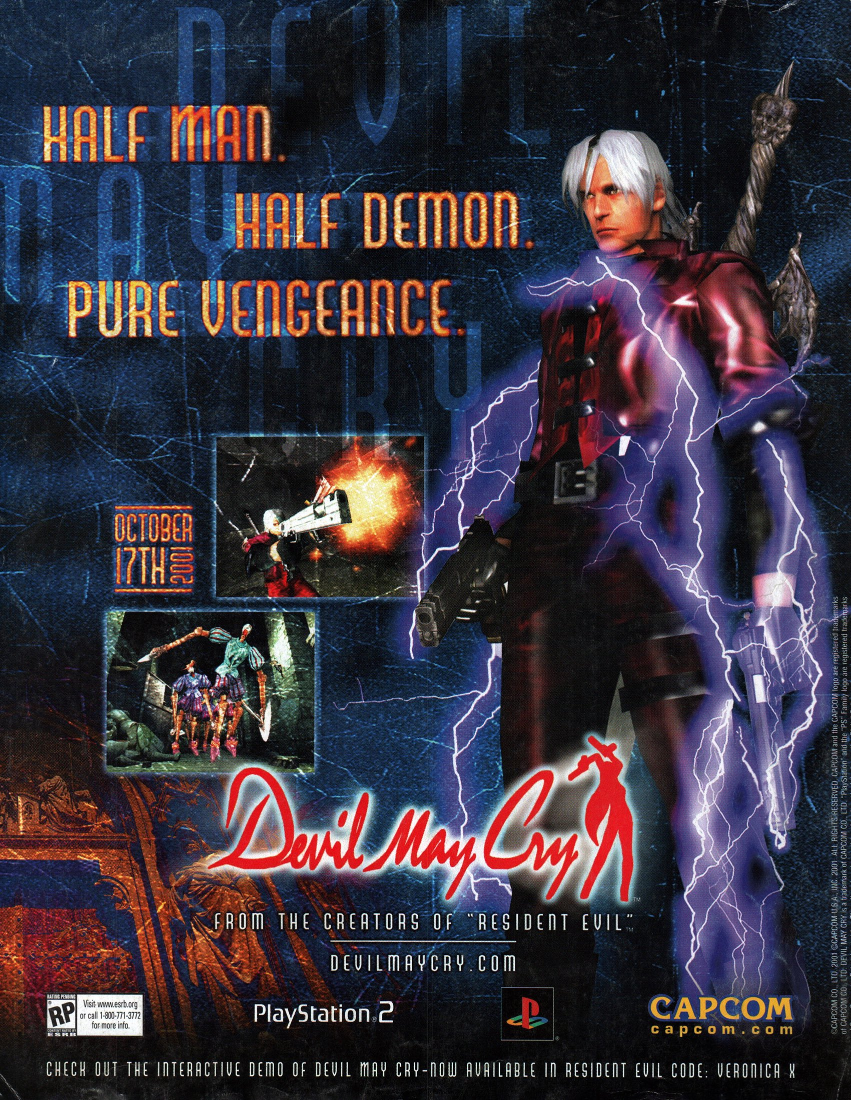
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